

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

3455

Honolulu, Hawaii

APR 07 2026

RE: S.R. No. 54

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2026
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committees on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs and Public Safety and Military Affairs, to which was referred S.R. No. 54 entitled:

"SENATE RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING OPEN WATER LIFEGUARDS AS FIRST RESPONDERS IN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THEIR ESSENTIAL ROLE IN EMERGENCY RESPONSE, PUBLIC SAFETY, AND COMMUNITY WELLBEING THROUGHOUT THE STATE,"

beg leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to recognize open water lifeguards, including ocean safety officers and water safety officers, as first responders in acknowledgement of their essential role in emergency response, public safety, and community well-being throughout the State.

Your Committees received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Health; Ocean Safety Department of the City and County of Honolulu; Hawaii Fire Department Ocean Safety Bureau; Maui County Ocean Safety Bureau; Aloha Independent Living Hawaii; Hawaiian Lifeguard Association; Outrigger Duke Kahanamoku Foundation; Keiki Injury Prevention Coalition; North Shore Chamber of Commerce; Hawai'i Water Safety Coalition; Rescue Tube Foundation; Marine Corps Civilian Services Water Safety; Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSME Local 152, AFL-CIO; Hawai'i Search and Rescue Alliance; and sixty individuals.



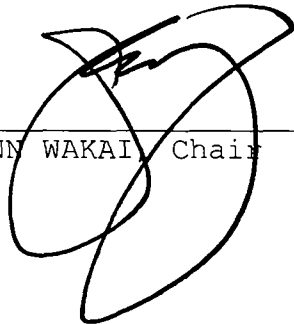
Your Committees find that open water lifeguards are often the first personnel to arrive at emergency scenes, initiating lifesaving interventions, securing hazardous environments, coordinating incoming responses, and providing advanced care until other first responders arrive. While these emergency personnel function as first responders, they have not been consistently or formally recognized within the same framework as other first responders. This measure affirms the State's commitment to protecting both its residents and visitors by recognizing the operational reality of emergency response by open water lifeguards.

As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committees on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs and Public Safety and Military Affairs that are attached to this report, your Committees concur with the intent and purpose of S.R. No. 54 and recommend its adoption.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committees on Energy and
Intergovernmental Affairs and
Public Safety and Military
Affairs,



CAROL FUKUNAGA, Chair




GLENN WAKAI, Chair



The Senate
 Thirty-Third Legislature
 State of Hawai'i

Record of Votes
Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs
PSM

Bill / Resolution No.:* SR 54	Committee Referral: ELG / PSM	Date: 3/31/26		
<input type="checkbox"/> The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure. If so, then the previous decision was to: _____				
The Recommendation is: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended 2312 <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments 2311 <input type="checkbox"/> Hold 2310 <input type="checkbox"/> Recommit 2313				
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
FUKUNAGA, Carol (C)	✓			
LEE, Chris (VC)	✓			
HASHIMOTO, Troy N.	✓			
INOUE, Lorraine R.				✓
DECORTE, Samantha	✓ <i>CR</i>			
TOTAL	4			1
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature: <div style="text-align: right; margin-right: 50px;"></div>				
Distribution: Original Yellow Pink File with Committee Report Committee Drafting Agency				

***Only one measure per Record of Votes**