

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



GOV. MSG. NO. 1247

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

May 30, 2025

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate,
and Members of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 409
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

The Honorable Nadine Nakamura
Speaker, and Members of the
House of Representatives
Thirty-Third State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 431
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Aloha President Kouchi, Speaker Nakamura, and Members of the Legislature:

This is to inform you that on May 30, 2025, the following bill was signed into law:

S.B. NO. 281, S.D. 1,
H.D. 2, C.D. 1

RELATING TO TORTURE.
ACT 147

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Josh Green M.D.".

Josh Green, M.D.
Governor, State of Hawai'i

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO TORTURE.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that many forms of cruel
2 and degrading sadism are inadequately addressed under existing
3 criminal law. Some acts occur during aggravated kidnappings or
4 following repeated assaults. Other acts, such as starvation or
5 electrocution, may inflict immense suffering without technically
6 causing bodily injury. The common denominator for torture is
7 the pervasive physical and psychological control exercised over
8 the victim by the abuser.

9 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to establish the
10 offense of torture as a class A felony in the State.

11 SECTION 2. Chapter 707, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
12 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
13 and to read as follows:

14 "§707- Torture. (1) Any person who knowingly:
15 (a) Causes serious bodily injury to another person within
16 the actor's custody or physical control;



- 1 (b) Causes serious bodily injury or substantial bodily
2 injury to another person, and the actor has previously
3 engaged in a pattern or practice of physically abusing
4 the other person; or
- 5 (c) Subjects a minor or vulnerable person to any of the
6 following acts, or to any substantially similar act,
7 on three or more occasions within a period of two
8 years:
- 9 (i) Strangling the minor or vulnerable person;
10 (ii) Biting, branding, burning, cutting, or
11 electrocuting the minor or vulnerable person;
12 (iii) Suspending the minor or vulnerable person by the
13 wrists, ankles, arms, legs, hair, or other part
14 of the body;
- 15 (iv) Depriving the minor or vulnerable person of
16 necessary food, water, or clothing;
- 17 (v) Restricting basic and necessary bodily functions
18 required for the personal hygiene of the minor or
19 vulnerable person;
- 20 (vi) Forcing the minor or vulnerable person to remain
21 in an area unsuitable for human habitation, such



1 as areas where urine or feces are actively
2 present;
3 (vii) Forcing the minor or vulnerable person to ingest
4 mind-altering drugs that have not been prescribed
5 by a physician for the minor or vulnerable
6 person, non-potable water, urine, excrement, or
7 poison; or
8 (viii) Exposing the minor or vulnerable person to
9 extreme temperatures without adequate clothing,
10 shall be guilty of the offense of torture.

11 (2) Proof that the victim suffered pain is not an element
12 of a violation of subsection (1) (c).

13 (3) For purposes of this section:
14 "Custody or physical control" means the forcible
15 restriction of a person's movements or the forcible confinement
16 of the person so as to interfere with that person's liberty,
17 without that person's consent or without lawful authority.

18 "Deprives" or "restricts" means to withhold in a manner
19 that materially endangers the physical or mental health of a
20 minor or vulnerable person.

21 "Minor" means a person under the age of eighteen years.



1 "Pattern or practice" means two or more acts within a
2 period of two years with a common state of mind.

3 "Vulnerable person" means a family or household member as
4 defined in section 709-906, an incompetent person as defined in
5 section 709-905, or a person who has a status as described in
6 section 706-662(5)(b)(ii).

7 (4) Torture is a class A felony.

8 (5) Where the conduct consists of depriving the minor or
9 vulnerable person of necessary food, water, or clothing, it
10 shall be a defense that the deprivation was caused solely by
11 poverty, destitution, or lack of financial means."

12 SECTION 3. This Act does not affect rights and duties that
13 matured, penalties that were incurred, and proceedings that were
14 begun before its effective date.

15 SECTION 4. If any provision of this Act, or the
16 application thereof to any person or circumstance, is held
17 invalid, the invalidity does not affect other provisions or
18 applications of the Act that can be given effect without the
19 invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions
20 of this Act are severable.

21 SECTION 5. New statutory material is underscored.



1 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.



S.B. NO. 281
S.D. 1
H.D. 2
C.D. 1

APPROVED this 30th day of May, 2025

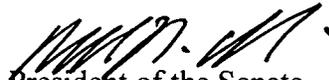
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Josh Green". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF HAWAII

THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF HAWAI‘I

Date: April 30, 2025
Honolulu, Hawai‘i 96813

We hereby certify that the foregoing Bill this day passed Final Reading in the Senate of the Thirty-Third Legislature of the State of Hawai‘i, Regular Session of 2025.


President of the Senate


Clerk of the Senate

SB No. 281, SD 1, HD 2, CD 1

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF HAWAII

Date: April 30, 2025
Honolulu, Hawaii

We hereby certify that the above-referenced Bill on this day passed Final Reading in the House of Representatives of the Thirty-Third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2025.



Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker
House of Representatives



Brian L. Takeshita
Chief Clerk
House of Representatives