

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
869 PUNCHBOWL STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-5097

February 27, 2008

TESTIMONY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

HOUSE BILL NO. 1823

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

The Department of Transportation (DOT) supports the intent of this bill to improve school, pedestrian and bicycle safety. However, the bill is not necessary because the DOT is already implementing the proposals in Section 2 and Section 4 of the bill.

The DOT has a Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator and the Department is actively executing the bicycle/pedestrian program proposed in Section 2. We have achieved success in the educational component of this program through our development and participation in Walk Wise Hawaii, the bicycle and pedestrian task forces, which are part of the state's Strategic Highway Safety Plan, School Traffic Safety Committee, the Honolulu Mayor's Advisory Committee on Bicycling, and the DOT public service announcements.

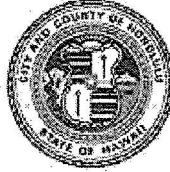
The Department has developed Bike Plan Hawaii, which is a bicycle master plan and we are working to include a pedestrian component. We also have an informational pamphlet titled "Bike Oahu", which provides bicycling enthusiasts with route information for Oahu.

The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program is a federal grant program and proposals are initiated from communities, schools, and other agencies. The DOT has already received grant requests for non-infrastructure and infrastructure school safety proposals. We have coordinated the program with the Department of Education and members of communities and organizations across the state. We are currently in the process of awarding the qualifying proposals to proceed toward implementation. The next call for federal grant proposals is scheduled for summer of this year. The Governor's Highway Safety Council is the designated organization under the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) approved SRTS process. The Council is tasked with evaluating proposals and therefore it is not necessary to establish the temporary advisory committee, as proposed in the legislation, to carry out the same responsibilities. It should also be noted that the SRTS federal grant program is scheduled to end in 2010.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION SERVICES
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

650 SOUTH KING STREET, 3RD FLOOR
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
Phone: (808) 768-8304 • Fax: (808) 523-4730 • Internet: www.honolulu.gov

MUFI HANNEMANN
MAYOR



WAYNE Y. YOSHIOKA
DIRECTOR

RICHARD F. TORRES
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

February 26, 2008

The Honorable Marcus R. Oshiro, Chair
And Members
Committee on Finance
House of Representatives
State of Hawaii
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Oshiro and Members:

Subject: Testimony on House Bill 1823, Relating to Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety

I am Wayne Y. Yoshioka, Director of the Department of Transportation Services of the City and County of Honolulu.

We support the intent of House Bill 1823. This bill will help to educate the public regarding the laws pertaining to bicycling and walking and provide bicycle and pedestrian safety information.

Because many of the paths and roadways that would be involved in a safe routes to school program are under City jurisdiction, we request that the City and County of Honolulu Department of Transportation Services (DTS) be involved in the temporary advisory committee and be allowed to provide input into the proposed bicycle and pedestrian program. Additionally, the City is currently involved in an update of its bicycle master plan. It will be beneficial if the State and City efforts on O'ahu are coordinated to maximize the benefits to its citizens.

We note that various dates in HB 1823 reflect that it was introduced in the 2007 Legislative Session and need to be updated to properly acknowledge the 2008 Legislative Session.

Mayor Hannemann and my department are committed to making Honolulu a bicycle and pedestrian-friendly place. We appreciate the State Legislature's efforts to promote walking and bicycling safety.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 1823.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wayne Y. Yoshioka", is written over a faint, larger version of the same signature.

WAYNE Y. YOSHIOKA
Director



3442 Waiialae Ave. #1, Honolulu, HI 96816 808.735.5756 voice 808.735.7989 fax
bicycle@hbl.org www.hbl.org

TO: Representative Marcus R. Oshiro, Chair
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Hawaii Bicycling League

HEARING DATE: Wednesday, February 27, 2008, 12:00pm

SUBJECT: Support for HB1823, Relating to Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety

This testimony is in support of House Bill 1823, which makes improvements to bicyclists and pedestrian safety in the traffic code, and establishes an advisory committee for bicycle and pedestrian safety. The Hawaii Bicycling League is a non-profit, membership organization dedicated to promoting cycling for health, recreation and transportation through advocacy, education and events.

According to the Surface Transportation Policy Project (2002), bicycling and pedestrian fatalities comprised nearly 13% of the United State's traffic-related deaths. In Hawai'i, bicycling and pedestrian fatalities average 25% of all highway deaths over the past 5 years. In convergence with Act 286, Smart Growth Initiatives, and a burgeoning community seeking multi-modal transportations, the State seeks to establishing bicycle as a viable mode of transportation and this bill will provide a step in which we can reverse these statistics while pursuing our goals.

We ask the Finance Committee to support this bill so that:

- Bicycling safety is increased, by ensuring a legal framework in which they can be confident that their rights are protected.
- A bicycle and pedestrian safety committee can monitor and provide safety education for our community.

HBL is currently providing a keiki bicycling safety education programs. To date, we've reached over 80,000 4th graders in public schools in the BikeEd program. We ask that HBL, as providers of a keiki education program and representative of 1,000 bicycling members, be consulted and a member of the bicycle and pedestrian safety committee.

Your support of HB1823 will assist in making Hawaii a safe and desirable place to bicycle.

Thank you for your attention and the opportunity to testify.

Testimony in Support of HB 1823, Relating to Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety
Hearing Scheduled Wednesday, February 27, 2008, 10:00 AM, Conference Room 308

Dear Chair Oshiro, Vice-Chair Lee, and Members of the Committee on Finance:

I want to give testimony in strong support of HB1823 in its current version.

I am an avid cyclist, pedestrian, jogger and hiker in Hawaii, and I am an active member of the Hawaii Bicycle League (HBL), the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Bicycling (MACB), and the Association for the Advancement of Retired People (AARP).

The bill reasonably upgrades and updates existing state traffic and safety laws to more adequately protect pedestrians and cyclists, while improving the clarity of the rules for motorists in regard to walkers and riders.

But it does not stop there. The bill seeks to implement two critical programs - one for school children who for reasons too numerous to mention - need safe routes to walk and pedal to school, what was once taken for granted and a primary physical activity for the majority of school children.

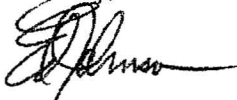
And finally the bill legitimates and encourages existing safety programs for senior citizens, as are already being undertaken by charitable, community, public service and other private sector groups. This bill formalizes increased dialogue and encourages greater public/private cooperation to address this widespread and increasing need.

The bill starts with existing efforts and builds on on-going partnerships. The cost is basically expenses for the safe routes for school children. We can't **not** afford to improve safety in our state.

Some may say that the statute changes might not be enforceable. This is not an issue. A Honolulu policeman on foot at an intersection once told me he could **not enforce stop light violations** at an intersection during gridlock, or it would worsen the problem for miles back down the road. This doesn't mean we shouldn't have traffic lights. We need to raise the standards of safety.

I respectfully ask that you pass House Bill 1823.

Sincerely,



Ed Johnson

FINtestimony

From: . ecocomm [ecocomm@hotmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 26, 2008 9:30 AM
To: FINtestimony
Subject: revised HB1823 & testimony in support

Testimony in Support of HB 1823, Relating to Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety
Hearing Scheduled Wednesday, February 27, 2008, 10:00 AM, Conference Room 308

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But it does not stop there. The bill seeks to implement two critical programs – one for school children who for reasons too numerous to mention – need safe routes to walk and pedal to school, what was once taken for granted and a primary physical activity for the majority of school children.

And finally the bill legitimates and encourages existing safety programs for senior citizens, as are already being undertaken by charitable, community, public service and other private sector groups. This bill formalizes increased dialogue and encourages greater public/private cooperation to address this widespread and increasing need.

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I respectfully ask that you pass House Bill 1823.

Sincerely,

Ed Johnson

Helping your favorite cause is as easy as instant messaging. You IM, we give. [Learn more.](#)

2/26/2008

Report Title:

Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety; Seniors and School Children

Description:

Makes changes to traffic code to improve overall bicyclist and pedestrian safety; and then implements two programs for main victim groups - seniors and school children.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TWENTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE,
2008
STATE OF HAWAII

H.B. NO. 1823

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY.

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

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the following factors provide an impetus to make meaningful revisions to the statewide traffic code:

(1) Hawaii has the highest rate in the nation of combined pedestrian and bicycling fatalities. Over the past five years, an average of 25.8 per cent of all highway deaths in the State were walkers and cyclists, while the national average hovered between twelve and thirteen per cent. Compared with the safest five states, Hawaii had four times more death among this most efficient, desirable, and up-and-coming segment of the transportation population;

(2) In response to a November 2006 ballot question, seventy-seven per cent of voters in the city and county of Honolulu said "yes" to making Honolulu a bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly city;

(3) Because traffic congestion has increased throughout the State, walking and cycling provide a faster mode of transportation in many areas at rush hour and on

weekends as compared with sitting in a fossil-fuel burning automobile;

(4) The State's overwhelming dependency on foreign imported energy poses a direct and immediate threat to the sustainability of our fragile and extremely isolated island chain, both of the life support system and the basic economy and ecology of its human and nonhuman residents; and

(5) Not only is movement toward more sustainable practices, policies, laws, institutions, and infrastructure possible, it is also a fast-approaching necessity if the residents of Hawaii would like to remain here and if the State is going to maintain its competitive advantage in the world.

The purposes of this Act are to improve the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians by first, revising the statewide traffic code; and then by implementing programs for the two primary victim groups on the street, seniors and school children.

SECTION 2. Section 291C-43, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

"[+]§291C-43[+] Overtaking a vehicle on the left.

The following rules shall govern the overtaking and passing of vehicles proceeding in the same direction, subject to those limitations, exceptions, and special rules hereinafter stated:

(1) The driver of a vehicle overtaking another vehicle proceeding in the same direction shall pass to the left thereof at a safe distance and shall not again drive to the right side of the roadway until safely clear of the overtaken vehicle. For any motor vehicle passing a bicyclist, a safe distance shall be not less than three feet, given that a bicyclist must from time to time reasonably leave a path of travel to avoid debris or other hazardous conditions, as heretofore provided in section 291C-145(c)(3).

(2) Except when overtaking and passing on the right is permitted, the driver of an overtaken vehicle shall give way to the right in favor of the overtaking vehicle on audible signal and shall not increase the speed of the driver's vehicle until completely passed by the overtaking vehicle."

SECTION 3. Section 291C-44, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

"(b) The driver of a vehicle may overtake and pass another vehicle upon the right only under conditions permitting such movement in safety. In no event shall such movement be made by driving off the pavement or main-traveled portion of the roadway[-], unless by a bicyclist escaping more hazardous conditions on the roadway or roadside."

SECTION 4. Section 291C-72, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

"§291C-72 Pedestrians' and bicyclists' right-of-way in crosswalks. (a) The driver of a vehicle shall stop for a pedestrian who is crossing the roadway within a crosswalk when the pedestrian or bicyclist is either:

(1) Upon the half of the roadway upon which the vehicle is traveling; or

(2) Approaching the vehicle so closely or so rapidly from the opposite half of the roadway as to be in danger, and shall not proceed until the pedestrian has passed the vehicle and the driver can safely proceed.

(b) No pedestrian or bicyclist shall suddenly leave a curb or other place of safety and walk [~~or~~], run, or pedal into the path of a vehicle which is so close that it is impossible for the driver to yield[-]; nor shall any vehicle speed up upon the approach of pedestrians or bicyclists at curbs, crosswalks, or other such areas, with the intent or effect of preventing them from crossing safely.

(c) Subsection (a) shall not apply under the conditions stated in section 291C-73(b).

(d) Whenever any vehicle is stopped at a marked crosswalk or at any unmarked crosswalk at an intersection to permit a pedestrian or bicyclist to cross the roadway, the driver of any other vehicle approaching from the rear shall not overtake and pass the stopped vehicle.

(e) Every person who violates this section shall be subject to the following penalties:

(1) For a first infraction, or any infraction not preceded within one year by a prior violation of this section, a [~~fine of \$150;~~] revocation of the person's driver's license and privilege to operate a vehicle for a period of ninety days;

(2) For an infraction that occurs within one year of a prior violation of this section, a [~~fine of \$300 and~~] revocation of the person's driver's license and privilege to operate a vehicle for a period of [~~ninety~~] one hundred eighty days; and

(3) For an infraction that occurs within two years of two prior violations of this section, and for the fourth and each additional infraction of this section, regardless of when committed, a [~~fine of \$1,000, and~~] revocation of the person's driver's license and privilege to operate a vehicle for a period of one [~~hundred eighty days.~~] year."

SECTION 5. Section 291C-74, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

"[+]§291C-74[+] **Drivers to exercise due care.** Notwithstanding other provisions of this chapter, every driver of a vehicle shall exercise due care to avoid colliding with any pedestrian, bicyclist, or any person upon any roadway and shall give warning by sounding the driver's horn when necessary and shall exercise proper precaution upon observing any child or any obviously confused or incapacitated person upon a roadway."

SECTION 6. Section 291C-75, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

"[+]§291C-75[+] **Pedestrians and bicyclists to use right half of crosswalks.** Pedestrians and bicyclists shall move, whenever practicable, upon the right half of crosswalks."

SECTION 7. Section 291C-79, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

"[+]§291C-79[+] **Pedestrians' and bicyclists' right-of-way on sidewalks.** The driver of a vehicle emerging from or entering an alley, building, private road, or driveway shall yield the right-of-way to any pedestrian or bicyclist approaching on any sidewalk extending across the alley, building entrance, road, or driveway."

SECTION 8. Section 291C-81, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

"§291C-81 **Required position and method of turning at intersections.** The driver of a vehicle intending to turn at an intersection shall do so as follows:

(1) Right turns. Both the approach for a right turn and a right turn shall be made as close as practicable to the right-hand curb or edge of the roadway[-], except as

provided by right-of-way of pedestrians in crosswalks; and in part IV of this chapter, when passing a bicycle.

(2) Left turns. The driver of a vehicle intending to turn left at any intersection shall approach the intersection in the extreme left-hand lane lawfully available to traffic moving in the direction of travel of such vehicle, and, after entering the intersection, the left turn shall be made so as to leave the intersection in a lane lawfully available to traffic moving in such direction upon the roadway being entered. Whenever practicable the left turn shall be made in that portion of the intersection to the left of the center of the intersection.

(3) The director of transportation and the counties in their respective jurisdictions may cause official traffic-control devices to be placed within or adjacent to intersections and thereby require and direct that a different course from that specified in this section be traveled by vehicles turning at an intersection, and when such devices are so placed no driver of a vehicle shall turn a vehicle at an intersection other than as directed and required by such devices."

SECTION 9. Section 291C-94, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

"§291C-94 Emerging from alley, driveway, or building. The driver of a vehicle emerging from an alley, building, private road, or driveway or from any public or private property other than a highway that is adjacent to a bicycle lane, bicycle path, sidewalk, or sidewalk area shall stop the vehicle immediately prior to driving onto the bicycle lane, bicycle path, sidewalk, or sidewalk area extending across the alley, building entrance, road, or driveway, or such public or private property, or in the event there is no bikeway or sidewalk area, shall stop at the point nearest the street to be entered where the driver has a view of approaching traffic thereon.

Each violation of this section shall be punishable by a three-month suspension of the violator's driver's license. Statements from three credible witnesses shall be sufficient to enforce the suspension."

SECTION 10. Section 291C-101, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

"§291C-101 Basic rule. No person shall drive a vehicle at a speed greater than is reasonable and prudent

and having regard to the actual and potential hazards and conditions then existing. Consistent with the foregoing, every person shall drive at a safe and appropriate speed when approaching and crossing an intersection or railroad grade crossing, when approaching and going around a curve, when approaching a hill crest, when traveling upon any narrow or winding roadway, and when special hazards exist with respect to pedestrians, bicyclists, or other traffic, or by reason of weather or highway conditions."

SECTION 11. Section 291C-114, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

"[+]§291C-114[+] **Parking on sidewalks.** The director of transportation is authorized to and the counties by ordinance may with respect to highways under their respective jurisdictions prohibit or restrict the stopping, standing, or parking of vehicles except for bicycles on sidewalks."

SECTION 12. Section 291C-125, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

"§291C-125 **Opening and closing vehicle doors.** No person shall open the door of a motor vehicle on the side available to moving traffic unless and until it is reasonably safe to do so, and can be done without interfering with, or causing immediate hazard to the movement of other traffic[-] including pedestrians and bicyclists, nor shall any person leave a door open on the side of a vehicle available to moving traffic for a period of time longer than necessary to load or unload passengers."

SECTION 13. Section 291C-142, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

"[+]§291C-142[+] **Traffic laws apply to persons riding bicycles.** Every person riding a bicycle upon a roadway shall be granted all of the rights and shall be subject to all of the duties applicable to the driver of a vehicle by this chapter, except as to special regulations in part IV and this part and except as to those provisions of this chapter which by their nature can have no application."

SECTION 14. Section 291C-143, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

"(b) No bicycle shall be used to carry more persons at one time than the number for which it is designed [~~and~~] or equipped."

SECTION 15. Section 291C-163, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

"(a) This chapter shall not be deemed to prevent counties with respect to streets and highways under their jurisdiction from:

(1) Regulating or prohibiting stopping, standing, or parking except as provided in section 291C-111;

(2) Regulating traffic by means of police officers or official traffic-control devices;

(3) Regulating or prohibiting processions or assemblages on the highways;

(4) Designating particular highways or roadways for use by traffic moving in one direction;

(5) Establishing speed limits for vehicles in public parks;

(6) Designating any highway as a through highway or designating any intersection as a stop or yield intersection;

(7) Restricting the use of highways;

(8) Regulating the operation and equipment of and requiring the registration and inspection of bicycles, including the requirement of a registration fee;

(9) Regulating or prohibiting the turning of vehicles or specified types of vehicles;

(10) Altering or establishing speed limits;

(11) Requiring written accident reports;

(12) Designating no-passing zones;

(13) Prohibiting or regulating the use of controlled-access roadways by any class or kind of traffic;

(14) Prohibiting [~~or regulating~~] the use of heavily traveled streets by any class or kind of traffic found to be incompatible with the normal and safe movement of traffic[+], except for classes of vehicles and uses that decrease traffic congestion, and improve average fuel efficiency, space availability, neighborhood safety, and other desirable conditions;

(15) Establishing minimum speed limits;

(16) Designating hazardous railroad grade crossing;

(17) Designating and regulating traffic on play streets;

(18) Prohibiting pedestrians from crossing a roadway in a business district or any designated highway except in a crosswalk;

(19) Restricting pedestrian crossing at unmarked crosswalks;

(20) Regulating persons propelling push carts;

(21) Regulating persons upon skates, coasters, sleds, and other toy vehicles;

(22) Adopting and enforcing such temporary or experimental regulations as may be necessary to cover emergencies or special conditions;

(23) Adopting maximum and minimum speed limits on streets and highways within their respective jurisdictions;

(24) Adopting requirements on stopping, standing, and parking on streets and highways within their respective jurisdictions except as provided in section 291C-111;

(25) Adopting such other traffic regulations as are specifically authorized by this chapter."

SECTION 16. Section 291C-197, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

"(a) Wherever bicycle lanes are provided on the roadway, moped drivers shall use [~~such~~] the bicycle lanes~~[-]~~, except when:

- (1) Traveling the posted speed limit; or
- (2) Signage prohibits use by moped drivers."

SECTION 17. To improve safety beyond traffic code revision, this act implements a safe route to school program for children, which has been effectively used in other states.

SECTION 18. Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

"§ - Bicycle and pedestrian safety program.

(a) The department of transportation shall establish and maintain a bicycle and pedestrian safety program for adults and children.

(b) The program shall:

(1) Provide education to bicyclists and pedestrians concerning applicable laws;

(2) Provide safety education and training; and

(3) Provide information on the location throughout the State of walking paths and bicycle paths and roadways equipped with bicycle lanes."

SECTION 19. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$, or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2008-2009, to establish a bicycle and pedestrian safety program.

SECTION 20. (a) There is established within the department of transportation a temporary advisory committee to study ways to adopt and implement the safe routes to school program in communities in Hawaii.

(b) The temporary advisory committee shall include members as follows:

(1) The director of transportation or the director's designee;

- (2) The state coordinator of the safe routes to school program;
- (3) The superintendent of education or the superintendent's designee;
- (4) Four members of the public representing the community, to be appointed as follows: one each from Kauai and Hawaii, appointed by the president of the senate; and one each from Maui and Oahu, appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives.

(c) The temporary advisory committee shall explore ways to effectively implement and administer the safe routes to school program in communities in Hawaii, including reviewing models used in other jurisdictions.

(d) The members of the advisory committee shall select the chairperson of the committee and shall serve without compensation but be reimbursed for expenses, including travel expenses, necessary for the performance of their duties.

(e) The advisory committee shall submit its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, not later than twenty days prior to the convening of the 2009 regular session.

(f) The advisory committee shall cease to exist on June 30, 2009.

SECTION 21. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ _____, or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2008-2009, for the advisory committee to conduct research on the implementation of the safe routes to school program and coordinate support services and for the reimbursement of expenses for members.

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of transportation for the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 22: This Act also implements a safe senior program, to be created by existing voluntary and public service organizations, by their recommendations to the legislature and to state, county, and city agencies for improvements in the planning, coordination, research, outreach and other aspects of safe senior mobility. Those organizations may transmit those findings and recommendations, including any additional proposed legislation, no later than 20 days prior to the convening of the 2009 regular session.

SECTION 23. This Act does not affect rights and duties that matured, penalties that were incurred, and proceedings that were begun, before its effective date.

SECTION 24. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 25. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

INTRODUCED BY: _____

FINtestimony

From: John Wendell [john.wendell@earthlink.net]

Sent: Tuesday, February 26, 2008 11:21 AM

To: FINtestimony

Subject: HB1823 Agenda #1, 2/27/2008

**Testimony to be presented regarding HB 1823, Wednesday, February 27, 2008, 10:00 a.m.
Conference Room 308, State Capital by John Wendell.**

Chair Oshiro, Vice Chair Lee, and the members of the House Finance Committee I appreciate the opportunity to comment on HB 1823. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB1823.

As I am sure you are aware, traffic congestion on our islands' roadways is becoming an increasing problem and it is projected to get worse as our population increases. The options for increasing the capacity of our infrastructure to handle more motor vehicle traffic are limited and often prohibitively expensive. One approach to this seemingly intractable problem is to reduce the number of motor vehicle trips people take each day, and particularly the trips that they take at peak traffic hours. As the much higher level of traffic congestion when schools are in session bears witness, a significant portion of peak traffic comes from parents driving their children to and from school. Many parents feel compelled to drive their children to school, not because it is too far for their child to walk or bicycle, but because such a trip would be too dangerous. The obvious solution is to provide safe routes for walking or bicycling to school. This will not only reduce traffic by relieving parents of the need to drive their children to school but will also benefit the children by providing them with daily exercise. The advisory committee established by HB 1823 is an important first step towards making the safe routes to school program a reality in Hawai'i's communities.

As a professor that teaches government accounting, I appreciate the pressure that this committee is constantly under to provide resources for worthy programs and that there are always many more deserving programs than can possibly be funded. This makes it difficult to fund HB 1823 in a year when projected revenues are declining, but I urge you to take the long-term view. As I am sure you are all aware, most projects aimed at reducing traffic congestion are very expensive. This is certainly true for roadway construction and improvement aimed at increasing motor vehicle capacity but it is also true of many programs to reduce motor vehicle trips, such as Oahu's proposed light-rail system. The safe routes to schools program has the potential to reduce traffic significantly and at a much lower cost than many other alternatives. Add to this the significant health benefits for children resulting from the exercise they will get walking or bicycling to school and the cost-benefit ratio associated with HB 1823 is much better than most of the legislation this committee is likely to see. HB 1823 is good public policy and cost-effective. I urge you to support its passage.

Sincerely,

John P. Wendell

John P. Wendell
john.wendell@hawaii.edu
<http://wendell.shidler.hawaii.edu/>

2/26/2008

FINtestimony

From: Natalie aka Bicycle Mom [the-green-one@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 26, 2008 11:58 AM
To: FINtestimony
Subject: HB1823 Agenda #1 Wed., 2/27 10 a.m. - addendum

TO: Representative Marcus Oshiro, Chair of the Committee on Finance
RE: HB 1823 Relating to Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety & amendment
HEARING: Wednesday, February 27, 10 a.m.

Aloha Members of the Committee on Finance,

I understand HB 1823 is going to include SB 2892 which updates the traffic code to include pedestrians and bicyclists. I am in support of this addition. I have experienced many near misses when drivers have come to close to me and my bike. This has even happened when I have had my son towed in the back of my bike. The addition of SB 2892 would require other changes in drivers' behavior that I believe will make it safer for pedestrians and bicyclists alike.

I ask that you support this change to the bill.

Aloha, Natalie

Natalie Iwasa
1331 Lunalilo Home Road
Honolulu, HI 96825
Phone 808-395-3233

FINtestimony

From: Natalie aka Bicycle Mom [the-green-one@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Monday, February 25, 2008 11:06 PM
To: FINtestimony
Subject: HB1823 Agenda Wed., 2/27 10 a.m.

TO: Representative Marcus Oshiro, Chair
RE: HB 1823 Relating to Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety
HEARING: Wednesday, February 27, 10 a.m.

Aloha Members of the Committee on Finance,

As a bicyclist, pedestrian and mother of two young boys, I fully support HB 1823. I first heard about the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program last fall. Within two months, another bicyclist and I set up a pilot Bike School Bus in Hawaii Kai. (The Bike School Bus includes two adults on bikes – one in front and one in back – who ride along a route, pick up children on their bikes and escort them to school.) One route goes to Koko Head Elementary School and another goes from Hawaii Kai to Niu Valley. We have been working on getting volunteer adult leaders as well as students to participate. This project has been challenging, and I would welcome inputs that would be provided by an advisory committee.

This program would also go hand in hand with the Hawaii Bicycling League's BikeEd program. Currently, HBL teaches fourth graders how to perform safety checks on their bikes and how to safely ride a bicycle on the road. After the course, however, there is no mechanism to encourage children to continue riding their bikes. The Safe Routes to School program would be such a vehicle.

In addition, I have spoken to parents who live within two miles of their children's schools. They drive their cars to school because they simply feel it is not safe enough to bike or even walk to school. With traffic congestion increasing and physical activity levels of children decreasing, we really need to look at ways to get these parents and their children out of their cars. I believe the SRTS is an important part of such a plan. Please support this bill with a "yes" vote.

Aloha, Natalie

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