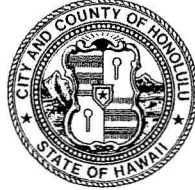


POLICE DEPARTMENT
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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MUFI HANNEMANN
MAYOR



BOISSE P. CORREA
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OUR REFERENCE SD-LC

January 23, 2008

The Honorable Joseph M. Souki, Chair
and Members
Committee on Transportation
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

LATE TESTIMONY

Dear Chair Souki and Members:

Subject: House Bill No. 1987, Relating to Motor Vehicles.

I am Captain Evan Ching of the Traffic Division of the Honolulu Police Department (HPD), City and County of Honolulu.

The HPD opposes House Bill No. 1987, relating to motor vehicles. This bill prohibits young drivers from using a telephone while operating a motor vehicle.

Although the HPD has concerns about any driver using any type of device to communicate while operating a vehicle on the roadway, it would be difficult to enforce. In discussing this bill with the Prosecutors, we agree that it would be difficult to determine if a person is less than 18 years of age by looking at them. This would become problematic for an initial stop based on the officer's observations. Unless the alleged violator is stopped for another violation, and this would become a secondary violation subsequent to the initial stop.

The HPD urges your committee hold House Bill No. 1987, as it would be a difficult task to enforce such a proposal.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

APPROVED:

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Boisse P. Correa in black ink.

BOISSE P. CORREA
Chief of Police

Handwritten signature of Evan Ching in black ink.

EVAN CHING, Captain
Traffic Division



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

LATE TESTIMONY

January 23, 2008

TESTIMONY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

HOUSE BILL NO. 1987

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

We support this bill. The Department of Transportation (DOT) believes the lack of driving experience and immaturity makes young drivers more hazardous while driving. Consequently, cell phones and other types of electronic communication devices present additional distractions that put these young drivers at a greater risk for accidents.

Sixteen states and the District of Columbia have special restrictive cell phone driving laws for young beginner drivers. In Maryland, drivers under 18 years of age who hold either a learner's permit or an intermediate permit are restricted from using a wireless communication device, except for contacting a 911 system. West Virginia prohibits young drivers that are part of the state's Graduated Driver's Licensing Program (Learner and Intermediate stages) from using a cell phone while driving.

Additionally, effective January 2008, Nebraska prohibits teenagers with learner's, provisional and school permits from using a cell phone, sending text messages or using other interactive electronic devices while operating a motor vehicle.

The Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) data reveals that between the years of 2002 and 2006, a total of 24 drivers, ages 15 through 17 years old, were involved in fatal motor vehicle traffic crashes.

The State of Hawaii crash data indicates that between 2001 and 2005, there was a total of 31,515 motor vehicle crashes resulting in injuries. Of that total, 2,134 or 6.8% of the crashes involved a driver ages 15 through 17 years old. This is significant considering that this age group makes up less than one percent of the total number of licensed drivers in Hawaii. Additionally, there were 22,270 crashes, where property was damaged, of which 1,400 or 6.3% of the crashes involved a driver between 15 and 17 years old.