



Working Together for Hawaii

888 Mililani Street, Suite 601
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813-2991
www.hgea.org

Telephone: 808.536.2351
Facsimile: 808.528.4059

Hawaii Government Employees Association
AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

The Twenty-Fourth Legislature, State of Hawaii
Hawaii State House of Representatives
Committee on Transportation

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association
January 28, 2008

H.B. 2491 – RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION

The Hawaii Government Employees Association strongly supports the purpose and intent of H.B. 2491. While there is a growing trend nationally toward privately financed transportation facilities, we do not believe privately constructed and operated toll roads to be the best solution to increase roadway capacity without raising state taxes.

There is a real need for new public transportation projects locally. However, if there are public-private partnership agreements, protecting the public interest is of paramount importance. This legislation requires that the Governor and the state Department of Transportation to follow the best practices in evaluating and negotiating such public-private partnership agreements to ensure that the public interest is protected.

For example, the bill requires an analysis of the public-private partnership proposal in terms of how the public interest is protected through controlling costs and traffic congestion and retaining control of transportation policy. Another set of criteria mandates a determination of the risks and benefits that are to be allocated between the public and the private partner (e.g. the risk of inaccurate or overstated estimates of traffic use and revenues). Long-term lease agreements of more than 20 years are problematic as are non-compete clauses.

Maintaining transparency in the review process is also required by this legislation. Transparency can be achieved through soliciting public comments, involving county governments and using an independent review panel to make a final recommendation. Finally, we suggest amending H.B. 2491 to protect the existing workforce and to make any partnership agreements subject to legislative approval. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of H.B. 2491.

Respectfully submitted,

Nora A. Nomura
Deputy Executive Director



January 28, 2008

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
ON HB 2491 RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION**

Thank you Chair Souki and committee members. I am Gareth Sakakida, Managing Director of the Hawaii Transportation Association (HTA) which has 360 transportation related members throughout the state of Hawaii.

Hawaii Transportation Association can support this measure.

Such policies will be crucial given the thought that public-private partnerships are being looked at as a panacea to traffic congestion woes. The Chicago and Indiana projects have their critics and it would be wise to examine the arrangements from all angles.

There is no free lunch so the long term public interest must be carefully ascertained.

Thank you.