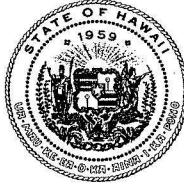


LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR



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

BRENNON T. MORIOKA
INTERIM DIRECTOR

Deputy Directors
MICHAEL D. FORMBY
FRANCIS PAUL KEENO
BRIAN H. SEKIGUCHI

IN REPLY REFER TO:

February 6, 2008

TESTIMONY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

HOUSE BILL NO. 3249

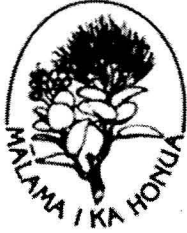
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

We support the bill, with recommended amendments.

The Department of Transportation (DOT) supports efforts to improve bicycle safety, however believes creating a new section in Chapter 291C, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), is not necessary. Chapter 291C-123, HRS, already prohibits vehicles, other than bicycles and mopeds, from parking on bicycle lanes or bicycle paths.

We also recommend some of the wording in the bill be amended to be more specific. The use of the word "vehicles" in the proposed legislation would also prohibit bicycles from parking upon bikeways because bicycles are defined as "vehicles" in our statutes. The use of the word "bikeway" would also include travel lanes and shoulders of highways because these sections of the highway are part of bicycle routes, which are included in the definition of bikeways.

If the intent of this bill is to increase the violation fines, we recommend that the provision for the increase be added to the existing Chapter 291C-123, HRS.



Sierra Club Hawai'i Chapter

PO Box 2577, Honolulu, HI 96803

808.537.9019 hawaii.chapter@sierraclub.org

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

February 6th, 2008, 9:00 A.M.

(Testimony is 1 page long)

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 3249

Chair Souki and members of the Committee:

The Sierra Club, Hawai'i Chapter, with 5500 dues paying members statewide, supports HB 3249, prohibiting parking in bikeways and providing for fines for such violations. Vehicles parked in bikeways is not only inconvenient for bicyclists and discourages bike use, it is very dangerous for steel obstacles to block the path of largely unprotected bicyclists.

Providing for clear bikeways is important for a variety of reasons. Bikeways are really an investment in the health of both Hawaii's residents and environment. Consider:

Safety. Honolulu unfortunately ranks high nationwide in pedestrian deaths. While there has been a decline in bicycle/pedestrian accidents nationwide, Hawai'i has witnessed an increase in our death rate from bicycle/pedestrian accidents. At 5.7 deaths per million of our population, our rate is over twice the national average. Worse, of our total traffic deaths, over 25% are cyclists and pedestrians, again about twice the national rate. Roughly 80% of car/bicycle accidents are the fault of the automobile operator.

Traffic Congestion. Some facts from Boulder Colorado, where a Transportation Management Plan that included enhanced bike/pedestrian facilities was implemented about 20 years ago. Both pedestrian trips and bike trips increased by over 10%, while car use diminished by 14% (growth in bus use accounts for the rest). Consider the potential in Honolulu, where our weather is conducive to outdoor activities year round. Many residents have indicated a desire to use bicycles for some part of their trip needs, if only there were safe facilities to do so. Despite lacking such facilities here in Honolulu, 5.7% of us walk or bike to work, 1.6 times the national average. Consider the untapped potential to economically reduce automobile use while still meeting transportation demand, if only safe facilities were available.

Public Health. One third of us are overweight or obese. This sad fact reflects, among other life style factors, the long-term consequences transportation decisions made in the past. We have not provided facilities for people to walk and ride bikes safely in our communities, where trips of 1/4 to 1/2 mile are entirely feasible on foot, and 3 mile or more on bicycles, if it were only perceived to be safe.

Please HB 3249 to clear the path for bicyclists.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.