

LATE TESTIMONY

March 24, 2008

To: The Honorable Joseph M. Souki, Chair
The Honorable Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Transportation

From: Corinne W. L. Ching

Re: In support of HCR140 / HR120, Relating to Mopeds

Committee Date: Monday, March 24, 2008, 10:00 a.m., Room 309

Dear Representative Souki:

I am writing in strong support of HCR140 and HR120, relating to mopeds. Mopeds provide inexpensive and convenient transportation for students, couriers, and delivery personnel, and a fuel-efficient alternative to the automobile and SUV. However, mopeds and their riders are not subject to the same regulation as automobiles or motorcycles and their drivers which results in a proven hazard on our roadways.

These resolutions intend to ensure our roads are safe for all of Hawaii's motorists. Modified mopeds can be operated at speeds in excess of what is safe and legal. Two moped riders died on Oahu's roads in 2007, seven moped drivers died on Oahu's roads in 2006, and eight moped drivers died on Oahu's roads in 2005. In addition, the exhaust system on mopeds can, and often is, modified such that the moped is more powerful but much noisier than designed or legal. Some moped owners, because of limited means, do not maintain the exhaust and other systems on their mopeds such that the moped is noisier than designed or legal or produces more exhaust than is legal. The combination of these factors results in a high percentage of illegally modified mopeds being operated on our streets, which contribute to traffic congestion, traffic hazards, and abundant amounts of unnecessary noise.

HCR 140 and HR 120 aim to convene a task force for the purpose of determining how the disadvantages of mopeds can be minimized, making mopeds and roads safer. Chaired by the Director of Transportation and consist of the Chief of Police, the Director of Finance, representatives of the moped sales industry, the moped rental industry, and members of the Senate, and the House of Representatives, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the task force would report its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature in a timely manner.

It is time that the Legislature address the community's concerns regarding moped safety. I urge you to please pass HCR140 and HR120. Mahalo.