



# Hawaii Automobile Dealers' Association

Wayne De Luz, President  
 Dave Rolf, Executive Director

January 29, 2008

Testimony in SUPPORT of the intent of SB2549  
 Presented to the Joint Committee Hearing on Transportation and International Affairs  
 and the Committee on Energy and Environment  
 At the hearing 2:45 p.m. Wednesday, January 30, 2008  
 In Conference Room 224, Hawaii State Capitol

Submitted by David H. Rolf, for the Hawaii Automobile Dealers Association  
 Hawaii's Franchised New Car Dealers

Chair English and Chair Menor and members of the joint committee:

General Motors may build as many as 60,000 of its Volt electric cars for their inaugural year in the U.S. market in 2010. Hawaii's share of such would be approximately 200 vehicles.

The Volt can travel 40 miles on a plug-in charge, and has a backup flex-fuel engine that runs on petroleum or ethanol fuel.

Demand for vehicles with gasoline-fueled engines is weakening as gas prices and environmental concerns rise, says Bloomberg.com.

Hawaii's future is tied to our population's ingenuity, our productivity, our individual mobility and the ability of our citizens to keep cash on shore. Imagine, as Speaker Calvin Say pointed out in his opening session remarks, if Hawaii could retain the \$2 billion sent offshore to purchase petroleum.

Harnessing the same natural forces that entice the visitors to Hawaii-- our trade winds, our plentiful sunshine, and our waves--to produce our electricity for transit, home, and commercial power would be a dream come true.

It will take vision.

A bill like this can be the beginning of such.

The Toyota Prius units have totaled more than 1 million units since the gasoline-electric auto first went on sale in Japan in 1997, according to the Bloomberg report.

Sales of hybrids in the U.S. this past year through July rose by 52 percent to 217,433, with Prius amounting to half the total, the report continued. Extrapolating these numbers, hybrid sales in the U.S. this past year would amount to around 3%.

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Hybrid/Electric vehicle registrations in Hawaii for 2006 (complete year) and 2007 (through August) are:

|                 | <u>2006 (Jan-Dec)</u> | <u>2007 (through Aug)</u> |
|-----------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| hybrid/electric | 1,601                 | 984                       |
| electric        | 20                    | 14                        |

Source: Jeff Foltz, Hawaii Auto Outlook

In 2006, hybrid/electric and electric vehicle sales in Hawaii totaled 2.4% of new (non-fleet) vehicle registrations.

The next 5 years will see the more changes in the auto industry than in any such period in the industry's more than 100-year history. Most changes will relate to power plants. There will be a shift away from gasoline-based power. The First Hawaiian International Auto Show, March 6-9, 2008, will in fact, feature a "green trail" which shows the direction that many auto manufacturers have taken to improve mileage and adapt environmentally friendly technology.

The change is already rapidly underway.

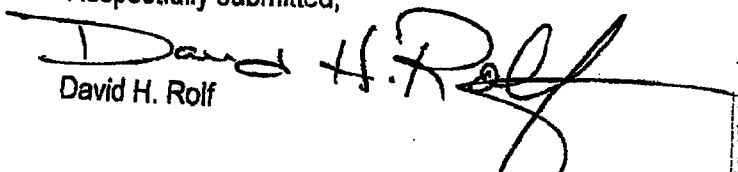
Hawaii's support for the efforts to improve individual mobility, while taking into account the needs of the environment, should be aimed at uniting cars and trucks with transit. Some of the proposals for blending rubber-tired transit with toll-carrying elevated lanes for vehicles, which may soon be larger numbers of hybrid/electric vehicles, should be immediately considered.

Caution, in setting the percentages of hybrid/electric vehicles for Hawaii roadways, without knowledge of the future production capabilities of the auto manufacturers, should be exercised.

It appears that the natural progression of the market will hit the goals outlined in the proposal, so an encouragement for additional lanes, overhead and otherwise, would be a good focus. Energy is conserved when inertia is maintained. Stop and go congestion in traffic wastes a society's energy—including the energies of its citizens.

HADA applauds the sponsors of this measure and the committee and will continue to support energy-efficient and time-efficient transportation for Hawaii.

Respectfully submitted,

  
David H. Rolf



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Supplemental testimony to that sent earlier this morning

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Hybrid vehicles which will be on display on the "green trail" as part of the 2008 First Hawaiian International Auto Show at the Hawaii Convention Center, March 6-9, 2008:

- Ford Escape Hybrid
- Honda Civic Hybrid
- Lexus GS Hybrid
- Lexus LS Hybrid
- Lexus RX Hybrid
- Mercury Mariner Hybrid
- Nissan Altima Hybrid
- Toyota Prius Hybrid
- Toyota Camry Hybrid
- Toyota Highlander Hybrid