

TESTIMONY BY GEORGINA K. KAWAMURA
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
STATE OF HAWAII
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
ON
SENATE BILL NO. 2603

February 4, 2008

RELATING TO PUBLIC HIGHWAYS

Senate Bill No. 2603 requires the Department of Transportation to:

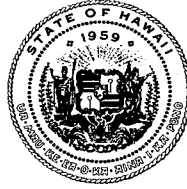
- Expend an unspecified percentage of the State highway fund annually to maintain and repair the State highway system and county roads.
- Annually determine the ten most critical public highways in need of maintenance and repair annually, and complete all necessary maintenance and repair to these highways.
- Annually determine the ten most critical public highways in resort destination areas in need of maintenance and repair annually, and complete all necessary maintenance and repair to these highways.
- Determine and adhere to minimum quality standards for materials and construction methods for maintenance and repair of public highways.
- Determine and adhere to a formula for pothole repair and maintenance of previous pothole repairs on public highways.
- Determine and adhere to a reasonable time period for use of temporary plates when maintenance and repair require extensive road patching of public highways.

The bill provides an unspecified penalty for failure to meet the above requirements.

We are strongly opposed to this bill as it would severely limit the flexibility of Department of Transportation to maintain, repair, and operate the State highway system; construct and reconstruct State highways; and respond to emergencies such as damages to roadways due to flooding or other natural disasters. The bill does not allow for any deviations from the requirements, as failure to meet the requirements would result in an unspecified penalty.

Further, the State highway fund, with its steadily decreasing fund balance, is in a precarious financial situation, and it is questionable if the fund would be able to support the imposition of such stringent requirements and still have the ability to operate in response to public needs.

With regard to the expenditure of an unspecified percentage of the State highway fund to maintain and repair county roads, the counties are generally responsible to maintain and repair their own roads.



STATE OF HAWAII
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TESTIMONY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

SENATE BILL NO. 2603

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

We oppose this bill.

This legislation requires the Department of Transportation (DOT) to maintain and repair the state highway system and county roads. However, we do not believe it is our responsibility to repair or maintain county facilities. Under Section 264-1 and Section 265-1, Hawaii Revised Statutes, counties are responsible for the repair and maintenance of all county highways.

We also believe that the amount of expenditures from the state highway fund should not be determined by statute, but rather should reflect the current need of the Department.

The bill also requires the DOT to determine the ten most critical public highways in need of maintenance or repair. The task of selecting these locations would depend on a multitude of factors such as signing, pavement surface, pavement marking, traffic signals and structure repairs. We have concerns regarding the manpower and resources necessary to create such a list.

The DOT already maintains minimum quality standards for materials and construction methods. These standards are specified in the 2005 Hawaii Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction DOT.

Currently, the DOT does not know of a "formula" used for pothole repairs. However, we continue to try various repairs methods over the years, which range from using a cold mix asphalt, hot mix asphalt to new types of asphalt products.