

testimony

From: Brooke Porter [brooke@pacificwhale.org]
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To: testimony
Subject: SB2816

Senate Committee on Transportation & Internal Affairs

Testimony Regarding SB2816
Relating to Intra-County Ferry Service
Feb. 13, 2008

Aloha:

We are supportive of the current intra-island ferry service provided by Expeditions Ferry service; however, we oppose this bill as it is a special interest bill that benefits one operator in Maui County's ocean tourism industry. Expeditions Ferry Service, in addition to providing ferry operation, sells many other tour packages that compete with other entities in Maui County's ocean tourism industry. SB2816 will provide an unfair advantage to Expeditions Ferry Service through an exemption from fuel taxes.

SB2816 is vaguely worded and the area of operation is not clearly specified. We are concerned this could allow Hawaii Superferry (HSF) to gain future access to the fuel tax exemption provided in the future. By stopping at Kaunakakai, Molokai, to or from Maui (intra-island), HSF may attempt to justify its operations as qualified under the Bill.

Currently, there is no evidence provided that demonstrates the current ferry operations in Maui County as being impeded or impaired at their current loading docks, slips or piers. Prioritizing the ferry use over other current commercial tour and fishing uses, and public use, is not justified.

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