



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

IN REPLY REFER TO:

April 1, 2009

TESTIMONY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 275
HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 246

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

House Concurrent Resolution 275 and House Resolution 246 requests the Department of Transportation to change the required minimum number of persons carried in a motor vehicle while traveling on a high occupancy vehicle lane from three to two passengers.

The Department offers these comments to help provide more information on congestion management and HOV systems.

The Department of Transportation (DOT) continues to manage its Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program. The goal of TDM and HOV lanes is to maximize person-carrying capacity of existing highways. The DOT needs the flexibility to set HOV occupancy requirements to effectively manage and maximize the people-carrying capacity of our highways. Each HOV lane operates differently, depending on traffic demands of the corridor.

The DOT continues to provide travel-time incentives to vehicles that carry more people through HOV lanes. The DOT changed the occupancy requirements of our Zipper Lane from 2 to 3 people when the lane became overcrowded and travel performance in this HOV lane became the same as the other lanes traveling in the same direction. The overcrowded condition in the Zipper Lane directly contradicted the goals of the federal TDM program and as a result, the occupancy requirements were increased.

Under the current occupancy requirements in the Zipper Lane: 1) travel time incentives are provided for motorists who carpool, 2) person-carrying capacity of our existing highways are increased, and 3) overall congestion is decreased by removing cars off of the highway through carpooling. The change resulted in shorter commute times. For example, the commute from Managers Drive to Pacific Street decreased from 32 minutes to 17 minutes in the Zipper Lane and 37 minutes to 26 minutes in the general purpose lanes due to the change in occupancy requirements.

The DOT will continue to seek ways to optimize the performance and capacity of our existing highways under TDM.

awana3-Elenoa

From: bernardinobunch@hawaiiantel.net
Sent: Friday, March 27, 2009 8:29 PM
To: TRNtestimony
Subject: HCR275 and HR246

Dear Honorable Chair Souki and Committee Members:

This is to express opposition to HCR275 and HR246.

During the timeframe our nation faced the highest cost of gasoline prices, many lives were affected and transportation adjustments immediately took place in the homes of many americans. While the high gas prices may not have been a welcomed change, it did force americans to re-examine their driving habits, consider purchasing fuel efficient cars, shift to public transportation, and increase passenger ridership (i.e., carpooling).

I am pleased to say that carpooling has been my best change in response to the temporary crisis. I have maintained my ridership for a total of 5 passengers and we all commute to and from Nanakuli on Monday through Friday. The passage of this bill will only promote vehicle growth on our highways and freeways, lessen the demand for public transportation, and discredit the idea of carpooling. Since the DOT increased ridership from 2 to 3 people, the public transportation has realized a tremendous cut in time (my children ride the bus) to its destination maintaining customer satisfaction; our carpool group continue to enjoy the benefits of sharing the gas bill and the pleasant commute in response to the high gas prices. To decrease the ridership back to 2 people will only put people back in their cars and revert to their old way of commuting.

The goal is to change our driving behavior and make sacrifices. No one enjoys sitting in traffic but unless drivers realize the benefit of carpooling with 3 people or more, and the buses whizzing by in ease, behaviors will not change, fuel dependency continues, and traffic grows to a gridlock. Please oppose HCR275 and HR246.

Aloha,

Ms. Rogeitte Bernardino
Resident of Nanakuli

awana3-Elenoa

From: Hanalei Y. Aipoalani [haipoalani@yahoo.com]
Sent: Friday, March 27, 2009 4:11 PM
To: TRNtestimony
Cc: har3-Alana
Subject: Support HCR275 and HR246

RE: HCR275 and HR246
Requesting the Department of
Transportation to Change the
Required Minimum Number of
Persons Carried in a Motor
Vehicle While Travelling on a High
Occupancy Vehicle Lane From
Three to Two Passengers.

Dear Honorable Chair Souki and Committee Members:

Aloha no!

I write to express my support for HCR275 and HR246.

From personal experience and in speaking with countless residents of House Districts 44 and 45, I am able to firmly state that Waianae Coast residents are burden by the distance and travel time of their daily commutes to and from Honolulu during peak morning and afternoon traffic hours. In general, motor vehicles carrying two persons endure the same conditions and situations (i.e. commute hours) as motor vehicles carrying one person.

Current state statutes require motor vehicles travelling on a High Occupancy Vehicle lane to carry minimally three passengers. Although well intended, the law adversely impacts the commute time of many Waianae Coast (Honokai Hale to Makua) residents who, for the most part, carry minimally two persons per motor vehicle.

Traffic congestion relief is essential. Both measures before the Committee will address this most pressing transportation concern facing many Hawaii residents.

I urge all members to support and adopt both HCR275 and HR246.

Regards,

Hanalei

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