



WAIKIKI IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

Late

Statement of
Rick Egged, President, Waikiki Improvement Association
Before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
Monday, February 2, 2009
1:15 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 224
in consideration of

SB 281 RELATING TO THE STATEWIDE TRAFFIC CODE

Good morning Chair English, Vice Chair Gabbard and members of the Committee:

I am Rick Egged testifying on behalf of the Waikīkī Improvement Association. WIA is a nonprofit organization representing 150 leading businesses and stakeholders in Waikīkī.

SB 281 allows the counties to prohibit or regulate electric personal assistive mobility devices on sidewalks. The Waikīkī Improvement Association strongly supports this measure. Waikīkī has the busiest sidewalks in the state. The use of Segways and motorized scooters can be very dangerous for pedestrians.

Current law allows Segway scooters to go up to eight mph on the sidewalk, yet sidewalks are designed for typical walking speeds of approximately three mph. Having vehicles moving over two times faster than pedestrian traffic in the same space is simply not safe.

The National Safety Council has determined that the average reaction time for an emergency braking situation is three-quarters of a second. At even eight mph, a Segway would therefore travel an average of nine feet before the user would even initiate braking. Segway claims that the device could then be stopped in an additional five feet for a total stopping distance of fourteen feet. Again, this would be completely unsafe for sidewalk use.

The energy expended in a crash of a rider on a eighty pound Segway scooter going eight mph would be many time greater than for a person walking or running.

Vehicles such as bicycles, scooters, skateboards, and roller skates have all been banned from Waikīkī sidewalks due to them having been found to be dangerous in a pedestrian environment.

Pedestrians are not regulated traffic and do not travel in a straight line. Vehicles going up to eight mph should not be mixed with pedestrians. Fast moving vehicles on the sidewalk would be especially dangerous to those with visual impairments.

Late

There is no viable way to enforce safe operation of Segways on the sidewalks. Segway users are not required to have insurance, though the devices are demonstrably dangerous to operate on a sidewalk.

Segways are virtually silent, and therefore a serious menace to the visually impaired.

Segways will eventually have mechanical and electrical failures preventing them from being operated in a safe manner.

There is no way to expect police to enforce a speed limit on our sidewalks. It is difficult enough for them to enforce the speed limits on our roads.

There are numerous other considerations as well particular to different geographic locations. This legislation simply allows each county to determine if the use of electric personal assistive mobility devices on sidewalks is safe or not. WIA believes the Counties are in the best position to make that determination.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide these comments.