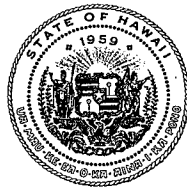


**SB 295**



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

IN REPLY REFER TO:

February 25, 2009

TESTIMONY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

SENATE BILL NO. 295

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION, INTERNATIONAL AND  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The purpose of Senate Bill 295 is to allow use of high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes regardless of occupancy levels, which would serve as a no-cost incentive to encourage the purchase of electric vehicles.

**The Department supports the intent of this bill with concerns.**

The following are our concerns:

1. Current federal regulations under SAFETEA-LU do not allow such vehicles without occupancy requirements to use HOV facilities after September 30, 2009 for federal-aid highways (23USC166). We are unsure whether the new federal regulation will provide for an extension.
2. If these vehicles are allowed to use HOV facilities without occupancy requirements, the DOT is required to monitor these facilities and annually certify that the performance of the facility is not degraded and operated in accordance with federal requirements. This annual certification includes maintaining a "degraded" facility level of operations of 45 mph for our freeways and not more than 10 mph below the speed limit for our other highways. Degraded facility levels of more than the above would require discontinuation of allowing energy-efficient vehicles to use HOV lanes in accordance with federal regulations (23USC166, Section 1121).

Testimony before the Senate Committee on  
Transportation, International and Intergovernmental Affairs

S.B. 295, Relating to Transportation

Wednesday, February 25, 2009  
1:45 p.m., Conference Room 224

By Carlos Perez Loriga  
Director  
Customer Technology Applications Division  
Hawaiian Electric Company, Inc.

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

My name is Carlos Perez Loriga and I am testifying on behalf of Hawaiian Electric Company, Inc., and its subsidiary utilities, Maui Electric Company, Ltd., and Hawaii Electric Light Company, Inc.

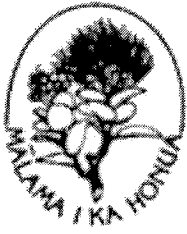
S. B. 295 proposes to allow hybrid and other energy-efficient vehicles to utilize high occupancy vehicle lanes regardless of the number of passengers in the vehicle.

Hawaiian Electric Company strongly supports S.B. 295, to promote the increased use of fuel efficient hybrid vehicles. We encourage the committee to consider an amendment to specifically include plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEV) as well. Increased consumer acceptance of energy-efficient vehicles, including plug-in hybrid electric vehicles, will aid in the reduction of greenhouse emissions and fossil fuel use and will also help enable the Hawaii Clean Energy Initiative's goal of 70% clean, renewable energy by 2030.

Hawaiian Electric Company would like to propose the following amendment (in bold) for your consideration that can help increase consumer acceptance of hybrid, plug-in hybrid, and other energy-efficient vehicles:

1. Page 3 lines 20-21 – “The term “hybrid vehicle” includes petroleum-electric hybrid vehicles, **plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEV)**, and hybrid electric vehicles (HEV).”

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



# Sierra Club Hawai'i Chapter

PO Box 2577, Honolulu, HI 96803  
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## SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION, INTERNATIONAL AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

February 25, 2009, 1:45 P.M.

*(Testimony is 1 page long)*

### TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 295

Aloha Chair English and members of the Committee:

The Sierra Club, Hawai'i Chapter, with 5500 dues paying members statewide, **supports** SB 295, providing that commuter lanes may be used by hybrids and electric vehicles.

Hawai'i is the most dependent state in the nation on imported oil. Some 50 million barrels are imported annually, nearly 80% of which originate from foreign sources. In addition, over 805,000 tons of coal are imported into our state. These sources provide power for over 92% of Hawaii's electricity generation. The combustion of these resources also contributes over 23 million tons of climate changing greenhouse gas into our atmosphere annually.

Hawaii's economic, environmental, and energy security demand that we reduce the amount of fossil fuel imported and consumed in Hawaii. This bill is a solid step in that direction. ***With little or no cost to the State***, this measure creates a subtle enticement that is sure to register when people decide what automobile to purchase.

When we're trying to solve big problems, sometimes we need to remember to focus on the little things.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.