
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO TRAFFIC ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that traffic accident
2 management is of utmost public importance, especially when a
3 fatality occurs. Although the evidence collected at traffic
4 accident scenes may be crucial to determining the cause of the
5 accident, these accident investigations proceed at a slower rate
6 in Hawaii than in comparable metropolitan areas in the United
7 States. The average length of time for lane closures in Hawaii
8 ranges from two to four hours for major traffic accidents to
9 over eight hours when a fatality occurs.

10 The legislature also finds that these prolonged closures of
11 traffic lanes adversely affect the public and our economy
12 because students cannot reach school and school activities or
13 return home afterwards; employees cannot reach their place of
14 work or attend meetings at remote locations; and businesses
15 cannot receive or deliver products necessary to conduct
16 business. These traffic jams also bode ill for the economy
17 because tourists cannot reach their destinations and make
18 purchases, and they may leave Hawaii feeling that they have not



1 been on vacation at all. Moreover, these prolonged
2 investigative delays may result in secondary accidents that
3 cause further delays.

4 The purpose of this Act is to expedite the investigation of
5 major, especially fatal, traffic accidents.

6 SECTION 2. (a) The police department of each county
7 shall:

- 8 (1) Identify the roadways, or class of roadways, that are
9 most critical to the free movement of persons and
10 commerce; and
- 11 (2) Establish protocols necessary to coordinate major
12 traffic accident investigations by law enforcement and
13 other authorities having jurisdiction over the
14 location of a major traffic accident, including
15 immediately notifying the medical examiner in the case
16 of fatal traffic accidents so that the medical
17 examiner or coroner can conduct the appropriate
18 accident scene investigation simultaneously with law
19 enforcement, to the extent practical.

20 (b) Nothing in this Act shall be construed to restrict a
21 police department's authority to enforce any of the powers
22 otherwise granted to it by law.



1 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

2



Report Title:

Highway Safety; Traffic Accident Investigation

Description:

Requires the police department of each county to identify roadways most critical to free movement of persons and commerce and establish protocols necessary to coordinate major accident investigations, including immediately notifying the medical examiner in fatal accident cases. Effective on approval. (SD1)

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.

