

TO: Representative Joe Souki, Chair
Representative Karen Awana, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Transportation

DATE: Friday, March 26, 2010

FROM: Natalie Iwasa
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HEARING: 10 a.m., Monday, March 29, 2010

SUBJECT: HCR 232/HR 161 Urging DOT to Make Turning Lanes in Hawaii Kai a
Priority - Comments

Aloha Representatives,

Thank you for this opportunity to testify regarding HCR 232/HR 161 which urges the state Department of Transportation (DOT) to make it a priority to install turning lanes at Koko Marina Shopping Center and Lunalilo Home Road in Hawaii Kai. I ride my bike down Lunalilo Home Road and past Koko Marina Shopping Center at least four times a week. I also drive those same roads for longer trips into town.

In February 2007, the state DOT presented plans to the community for the left turn lane into Koko Marina Shopping Center as well as the additional right turn lane from Lunalilo Home Road (LHR) onto Kalaniana'ole Hwy. Another presentation was made to the Transportation Committee of the Hawaii Kai Neighborhood Board in October 2009. I have the following concerns about bicycle and pedestrian safety related to these projects:

- Bicyclists and pedestrians regularly use the mauka shoulder area of Kalaniana'ole Hwy. In addition, larger vehicles that would have an awkward time pulling into the parking lot, such as fire trucks and the "duck mobile" park on a gravel area between the shoulder and the parking lot near the proposed turning lane. The creation of a stacking turn lane going into Koko Marina Shopping Center would require increasing the amount of paved roadway for cars thus reducing the amount of space for pedestrians and bicyclists. The DOT has not yet addressed this concern other than to state there is a right of way that would be used.
- LHR currently includes a "pork chop island" between the turn lane and straight-through lanes for pedestrians waiting to cross LHR. My understanding is this island would be removed in order to provide room for the second right turn onto

Kalaniana'ole Hwy. This would mean that pedestrians would have to cross five lanes of traffic all at once rather than the current four. In addition, bicyclists heading makai on LHR would be required to cross two lanes of traffic going from right to left in order to get to the through lane and then may be competing with traffic turning left onto Kalaniana'ole Hwy. as well as going straight. It is already a difficult maneuver trying to cross one lane when traffic is heavy. The DOT has not addressed these concerns.

During the 2009 legislative session, Act 54 was passed. This act is known as the Complete Streets law and requires all road users to be considered when planning for new construction for roads. Given the concerns outlined above, I have serious reservations about these projects and believe they will reduce safety for pedestrians and bicyclists rather than increase it.