



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

February 7, 2011

TESTIMONY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

HOUSE BILL NO. 1473

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

The Department of Transportation opposes House Bill 1473, which requires, commencing January 1, 2012, all new lighting fixtures that are installed or replaced on public highways to be fully or partially shielded, to minimize glare and light pollution.

Federal highway standards dictate the amount of illumination provided by lighting fixtures on federally funded highways. In short, brighter-illuminating fixtures allow the light-poles to be placed farther apart than those fixtures with less illumination. Fully or partially shielded lighting fixtures diminish the degree of illumination. As such, this requirement will increase the cost of new highway projects because it will require more light-poles to be installed to meet the federal highway safety standards. In general, for every 10 light-poles with universal lenses, we will require 12 light-poles with shielded or directional lenses.

The Department has been using directional flat lenses on highways in areas with county ordinances requiring its use, such as west Hawaii, and in areas with concerns regarding Section 7, or US Fish and Wildlife issues, such as Kauai. The Department takes its commitment to the environment seriously, and will utilize directional lenses where currently required, and where future requirements are anticipated. However, the Department believes that lighting requirements should be governed by federal and state safety, engineering judgment, and applicable environmental requirements. Mandating the use of shielded lenses may make it difficult for the Department to meet ever changing federal requirements, or to utilize emerging technologies. Based on the foregoing, the DOT opposes House Bill 1473.