

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

TESTIMONY ON SENATE BIL 539, SD2 (SSCR666),  
RELATING TO VETERANS

PRESENTATION TO THE

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS, MILITARY, & INTERNATIONAL  
AFFAIRS, & CULTURE AND THE ARTS

BY

MR. RONALD P. HAN  
DIRECTOR OF OFFICE OF VETERANS SERVICES

March 13, 2013

Chair Takai, Vice Chair Ito and Committee members:

I am Ron Han, Director of the Office of Veterans Services (OVS). I appreciate this opportunity to provide testimony in support of the concepts in Senate Bill 539, SD2 (SSCR666).

This measure would exempt certain total and permanently disabled veterans from paying any motor vehicle registration expenses. People who qualify must be a resident of Hawaii and be a 100% disabled veteran as determined by the United States Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) or its predecessor and in receipt of disability retirement pay. These individuals shall not be required to pay any motor vehicle registration expenses.

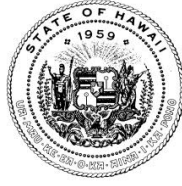
I believe that this is necessary to give back to those who have served valiantly in uniform in support and in sacrifice to our country. The freedoms we enjoy today and been paved by their dedicated and honored service.

We defer to the agency with direct responsibility for implementation.

The OVS supports the concepts and intent expressed in this measure as long as its implementation does not impact or replace the priorities set forth in the Executive Biennium Budget for Fiscal Biennium 2013-2015.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of Hawaii's Veterans and their families in support of SB 539, SD2, (SSCR666).

NEIL ABERCROMBIE  
GOVERNOR



Testimony of  
GLENN M. OKIMOTO  
DIRECTOR

Deputy Directors  
JADE BUTAY  
FORD N. FUCHIGAMI  
RANDY GRUNE  
JADINE URASAKI

IN REPLY REFER TO:  
(808) 586-2165

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

March 13, 2013  
8:30 a.m.  
State Capitol, Room 312

**S.B. 539, S.D. 2**  
**RELATING TO VETERANS**

House Committee on Veterans, Military and International Affairs and  
Culture and the Arts

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The Department of Transportation (DOT) strongly appreciates veterans and respectfully recognizes the merits to reward their sacrifices for duty, honor and country with lower fees and charges.

However, the DOT **opposes** S.B. 539, S.D. 2 because it would have an adverse impact on fees that support the operations and maintenance, and construction of our highways.

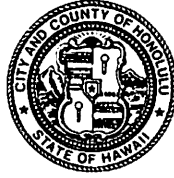
This lower fee for the state vehicle weight tax will reduce the revenues deposited into the State Highway Fund. The state vehicle weight tax is estimated to make up 26 per cent of the total State Highway Fund Revenues for fiscal year 2014 and any proposed decrease would have a negative impact on the health of the State Highway Fund.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



DEPARTMENT OF CUSTOMER SERVICES  
**CITY & COUNTY OF HONOLULU**  
DIVISION OF MOTOR VEHICLE, LICENSING AND PERMITS  
ADMINISTRATION  
P.O. BOX 30300  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96820-0300

KIRK CALDWELL  
MAYOR



SHERI T. KAJIWARA  
DIRECTOR

DENNIS A. KAMIMURA  
LICENSING ADMINISTRATOR

March 8, 2013

The Honorable K. Mark Takai, Chair  
and Members  
Committee on Veterans, Military, and  
International Affairs and Culture and the Arts  
State House of Representatives  
Hawaii State Capitol  
514 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Takai and Committee Members:

Subject: S.B. No. 539 SD2, Relating to Veterans

The City and County of Honolulu and the Counties of Hawaii, Kauai and Maui are opposed to S.B. No. 539 SD2 as this bill will eliminate the collection of the County Highway Beautification Fee for certain totally and permanently disabled veterans.

Based upon previous testimony, the intent of this bill is the waiver of the State Registration Fee as prescribed in Section 249-31, HRS. In order to meet this intent, we have no objections to the insertion of the language contained in H.B.170 HD2 into this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dennis A. Kamimura".

Dennis A. Kamimura  
Licensing Administrator

Enclosure

**The Service Member's Voice in Government**  
**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR UNIFORMED SERVICES**  
**Hawaii Chapter (HI-1)**

March 10, 2013

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 539SD2**  
**RELATING TO VETERANS.**

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS, MILITARY, AND INTERNATIONAL**  
**AFFAIRS AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

**HEARING ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13<sup>TH</sup> AT 8:30 PM, IN CONFERENCE**  
**ROOM 312**

Aloha Chair Takai and Vice Chair Ito: Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony regarding HB 539SD2. The National Association for Uniformed Services (NAUS) is honored to be recognized as "The Service Member's Voice in Government." Here, in the great State of Hawaii, NAUS Hawaii Chapter's (HI-1) 519 members serve proudly as a component part of our nation's largest per-capita uniformed service community.

NAUS Hawaii Chapter (HI-1) members applaud your efforts to amend Section 286-51 Hawaii Revised Statutes and exempt certain totally and permanently disabled veterans from paying motor vehicle registration expenses.

Providing this preference in state law will be greatly appreciated by our disabled veterans who served and sacrificed so selflessly.

NAUS Hawaii Chapter (HI-1) respectfully encourages your committee to consider passing SB 539SD2 as written.

*D Egge*

Dennis Egge; Chapter President



1298 Kukila Street, Honolulu, Hawaii 96818  
[Naushawaii1@yahoo.com](mailto:Naushawaii1@yahoo.com); 808-382-5833



Headquarters: Department of State of Hawaii  
438 Hobron Lane, Suite 407  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96815

March 11, 2013

**Testimony in Support of SENATE BILL 539  
Relating to Veterans  
Before the  
House Committee On Veterans, Military, & International Affairs,  
& Culture and the Arts  
Hearing On Wednesday, March 13, 2013, 8:30 A.M.  
In Conference Room 312**

Chair Takai, Vice Chair Ito and Committee Members,

The Department of Hawaii, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) represents more than 3,800 members in 20 Posts located throughout the State of Hawaii. VFW is a federally chartered national association of soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen who have served the United States of America in wars, campaigns, and expeditions on foreign soil or in hostile waters.

S.B. 539: Exempts certain totally and permanently disabled veterans from paying motor vehicle registration expenses on certain vehicles. Effective 07/01/2050 (S.D. 2)

An exemption from motor vehicle registration fees to 100 percent disabled veterans—probably a very small percentage of all vehicle owners in Hawaii—is certainly a measure that will provide financial relief to many who are unable to pursue paid employment due to their total and permanent service-related disability.

VFW Hawaii members are grateful for your efforts to help certain veterans in a manner that is not only fiscally affordable, but also eminently equitable. We urge this Committee to make this measure effective upon its approval by the Governor of Hawaii—not July 1, 2050!

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of the original S.B. 539, but in opposition to the effective date of S.D. 2.

*Lawrence M.G. Enomoto*

Lawrence M.G. Enomoto  
VFW Hawaii State Legislative Liaison

# TAXBILLSERVICE

126 Queen Street, Suite 304

TAX FOUNDATION OF HAWAII

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 Tel. 536-4587

SUBJECT: MISCELLANEOUS, Exempt motor vehicle registration for disabled veterans

BILL NUMBER: SB 539, SD-2

INTRODUCED BY: Senate Committee on Ways and Means

BRIEF SUMMARY: Amend HRS section 286-51 to provide that disabled veterans (except those dishonorably discharged) shall be exempt from the motor vehicle registration fees imposed under this section; provided the exemption shall not apply to commercial vehicles and be applicable to only one motor vehicle. The fees include: (1) fees charged for the issuance of a new certificate of motor vehicle ownership; and (2) highway beautification fees (including a fee for the removal of abandoned/derelect vehicles).

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2050

STAFF COMMENTS: Incidental fees that may be collected along with the registration of a motor vehicle in the state may include a fee for the issuance of a duplicate or new certificate of ownership of a motor vehicle and fees for the beautification of highways and the removal of abandoned or derelect vehicles. The amount of the fees varies by counties. This measure proposes to exempt disabled veterans from these specific motor vehicle registration fees.

It should be remembered that any reduction in fees for a particular program or purpose granted to a select group of motor vehicle owners would result in the lost revenues being made up by those who must continue to pay the fees. Motorists who will have to pick up the additional cost created by this proposed exemptions should hold those who would propose such exemptions responsible for raising their taxes.

It should be remembered that these fees, in addition to the fuel tax, the motor vehicle weight tax and registration fees, are user charges designed to recover the cost of construction and maintenance of Hawaii's highway system. All motorists who use the state highways should pay their fair share of that cost. While these specific fees go toward beautification or, in the case of the certificate of ownership which accrues to the general fund, the exemption proposed is not based on whether or not the beneficiary of the exemption is capable of paying the fee. Exemptions based solely on physical condition or age have no place in the tax law and represent poor tax policy. So while the exemptions would provide relief to a disabled veteran, a single mom making minimum wage, barely making ends meet, must continue to pay these fees. As such, this proposal cannot be justified.

Digested 3/11/13

**vmitestimony**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 11, 2013 3:57 PM  
**To:** vmitestimony  
**Cc:** sonnyfernan@msn.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SB539 on Mar 13, 2013 08:30AM

**SB539**

Submitted on: 3/11/2013

Testimony for VMI on Mar 13, 2013 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Stanley Y. Fernandez, Sr.	Veterans of Foreign Wars Hawaii	Support	No

Comments: Urge your strong support for SB539. Stan Fernandez, Sr. Past State Commander Veterans of Foreign Wars Dept of Hawaii

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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**vmitestimony**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 12, 2013 9:47 AM  
**To:** vmitestimony  
**Cc:** fourewa\_hi@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SB539 on Mar 13, 2013 08:30AM

**SB539**

Submitted on: 3/12/2013

Testimony for VMI on Mar 13, 2013 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Harold Alejandro	Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 970	Support	No

Comments: Dear Sirs/Ma'am on the House VMI Committe. We at the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Col Horace Hickam Post 970, with over 500 active members of all branches of service who fought on various wars and Campaigns on behalf of this GREAT Nation would like to submit our SUPPORT for SB 539. Over 40% of our members are on Fixed Incomes and have various disabilities they endure daily. Support of is worthy bill serves merits since it also remembers the Sacrifice these humble Veterans made to their nation and to our Freedom. Please also amend this bill to take EFFECT UPON ITS approval into LAW. God Bless and Thank You for your Time. Hal Alejandro, VFW Post 970 Jr Vice COMMANDER / Post Legislative Liaison

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**vmitestimony**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 10, 2013 7:33 AM  
**To:** vmitestimony  
**Cc:** palehorse235@gmail.com  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for SB539 on Mar 13, 2013 08:30AM\*

**SB539**

Submitted on: 3/10/2013

Testimony for VMI on Mar 13, 2013 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Charles Among Jr	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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## **vmitestimony**

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**From:** boutland@hawaii.rr.com  
**Sent:** Friday, March 08, 2013 5:52 PM  
**To:** vmitestimony  
**Subject:** SB539 SD2

**Importance:** High

Al oha,

TESTI MONY

Mr. Chairman, members of the Commi ttee.

Thank you for the opportuni ty to submit testimony regarding SB539 SD2.

As one of the small group of Permanently Disabled Veterans residing in Hawai i and on their behalf, I respectfully suggest that this Commi ttee consider the moral aspects of the intended purpose of this proposed legislation, as well as its fiscal impact.

No other State offering this exemption has attempted to reduce the number of grantees based merely on their incomes.

I do not believe the Hawaiian residents want to be the only State labeled as "unable" or "unwilling" to provide this fiscal assistance to Permanently and Totally Disabled Veterans!

After more than a century of being denied earned retirement pay because they chose to accept VA disability compensation, the congressional decision to grant both benefits to those 50% disabled or greater will probably make some of them ineligible based on their recently acquired income level.

All Permanently Disabled Veterans still endure an appreciable degree of pain; all of them are still unable to seek gainful employment; most likely all of them still suffer varying degrees of PTSD and/or the affects of exposure to Agent Orange; many of them suffer the loss of limbs; many must rely on a wheelchair to go anywhere!

All of these Permanently Disabled Veterans deserve this exemption, not just some of them! I hope this Commi ttee will unanimously approve of SB539 SD2! Thank you.

Very respectfully, Senior Chief Brooks W. Outland, USN (Ret), 87- 1057 Huamoa Street, Wai anae, HI 96792, 744-2945.