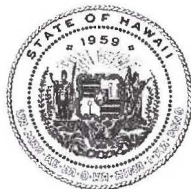


HB 1008, HD1

RE: RELATING TO BLIND  
PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

TESTIMONY

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



**Testimony by:**  
FORD N. FUCHIGAMI  
DIRECTOR

Deputy Directors  
JADE T. BUTAY  
ROSS M. HIGASHI  
EDWIN H. SNIFFEN  
DARRELL T. YOUNG

IN REPLY REFER TO:

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

March 22, 2016  
3:00 PM  
State Capitol, Room 229

**H.B. 1008 H.D.1**  
**RELATING TO BLIND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY**

Senate Committee(s) on Transportation and Energy & Human Services

The Department of Transportation (DOT) offers **comments** to this measure which requires the examination of the applicant's knowledge to operate a motor vehicle in a manner that exercises due care to ensure the safety of pedestrians who are blind or visually impaired.

The examinations that test the applicant's knowledge of the "rules of the road" are based on the traffic laws of the State and the traffic ordinances of the county where the resident resides or intends to operate a motor vehicle. All written examinations administered by the examiner of drivers already contain a question that tests the applicant's knowledge of operating a vehicle in a manner that ensures the safety of blind or visually impaired pedestrians. Therefore, DOT believes this measure is not needed.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



## DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

919 Ala Moana Boulevard, Room 101 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96814  
Ph. (808) 586-8121 (V/TDD) • Fax (808) 586-8129

March 22, 2016

### TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON TRANSPORTATION AND ENERGY AND HUMAN SERVICES

#### House Bill 1008, HD1 – Relating to Pedestrian Safety

The Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) supports House Bill 1008, HD1 that requires the examination for a driver's license to test the applicant's knowledge of operating a vehicle in a manner that ensures the safety of blind or visually impaired pedestrians.

The bill requires the examination for a driver's license to test the applicant's knowledge of how to exercise due care that ensures the safety of pedestrians who are blind or visually impaired. This bill may not be the appropriate mechanism to accomplish that objective.

The State Department of Transportation works with the counties regarding the driver's manual and how to add and delete questions from the driver's written examination. DCAB suggests working with the Department of Transportation on adding questions related to pedestrian safety and including questions about how to identify a pedestrian who is blind or visually impaired and use more caution when noticing a pedestrian who is blind or visually impaired on the roadway. Adding questions to the driver's examination to specifically mention one group of people with disabilities may not require a change in statute, but a cooperative effort between state and county agencies to add the question to the driver's examination.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

BARBARA FISCHLOWITZ-LEONG  
Chairperson  
Legislative Committee

FRANCINE WAI  
Executive Director

## Kaala Coleman

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**From:** TRE Testimony  
**To:** Alisha Leisek  
**Subject:** RE: HELP! please submit my testimony or send me a link. LANDA

**From:** phelan [<mailto:phelanl001@hawaii.rr.com>]  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 19, 2016 9:37 AM  
**To:** Alisha Leisek  
**Subject:** HELP! please submit my testimony or send me a link. LANDA

THE SENATE  
THE TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE  
REGULAR SESSION OF 2016

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND ENERGY

Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair  
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Senator Gil Riviere, Vice Chair

Strong Support of Bill HB 1008

Yolanda Phelan  
I represent the Hawaii Association of the Blind

The Hawaii Association of the Blind strongly believe that at least one question regarding blind pedestrians must be included in all drivers tests in the state; that responsibilities toward blind pedestrians must be a part of driver's education; and that the driver's training manual must have a more complete explanation of the responsibilities of drivers toward blind pedestrians.

Because we are independent blind persons who uses sidewalks and crosses intersections where there are light signals, stop signs, cross walks that are marked or not marked.

It has been our experience that drivers in the state of Hawaii lack education regarding blind pedestrians. It has been on numerous occasions that cars do not give blind persons the right of way to cross the street, Instead as soon as the light turns green they proceed and make a right turn with no regards to the safety of a blind person preparing to cross the street.

**EXAMPLE:**

We often have had to wait on several occasions for the light signal to go through another cycle because several cars are waiting to turn right and once one turns the rest follow.



Another situation is when we crossing an intersection a car will stop in the middle of the cross walk which forces us to walk around their car outside the marked area and forces us to walk into the field of traffic. Sometimes drivers honk their horn and we are trying to focus on the traffic around us and we have no idea who they are honking at. Sometimes they honk and yell you have a pretty dog there. Or “you can go now”. This is distracting not only to the person but to the Guide Dog as well.

The department of transportation and others in authority are not taking into consideration that there are elderly blind and others who are not good traveler because of lack of training or who may have multiple disabilities who may be crossing in the middle of the block or in other inadvisable places. These people have the right of way as long as they are properly identified by a guide dog or cane.

#### HYBRED CARS

These drivers need to be educated that blind people use sound to cross the street and need to be aware that blind people cannot hear their car running and might think it is ok to cross.

One of our members was crossing the street and a car ran over his cane it went flying and he had no idea which way it went. He then had to Braille his way home by asking questions of strangers to help direct him. a blind pedestrian was hit while crossing in the cross walk on University Avenue and King street It is known that blind persons have been hit on Kuakinni near Nuuanno.

Recommendations that a stronger emphasis be made regarding blind pedestrians in the Hawaii State Training Drivers Manual  
Responsibilities of drivers need to be more specific.

In the Hawaii State Drivers training manual and that the Driver Education Instructors be trained how to instruct students who are taking the Drivers Education training classes at schools.  
We suggest the trainers seek input from me mbers from the blind community such as the Hawaii Association of the Blind.

Yolanda Phelan  
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