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IN REPLY REFER TO:

STATE OF HAWAII
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9:30 a.m.
State Capitol, Room 229

**H.B. 715, H.D.1, S.D.1
RELATING TO LOW SPEED ELECTRIC BICYCLES**

Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection

The Department of Transportation (DOT) **supports** this bill with recommended amendments.

Sections 249-1 and 286-2, HRS, contain the definition of a bicycle, so the definition of an electric bicycle should also be included in these sections.

Since the bill proposes that electric bicycles be registered as a bicycle in Section 249-14, HRS, it is recommended that Section 249-14, HRS, be amended by adding electric bicycles to Sections 249-14 (a) and (b), HRS.

It may also be prudent to require helmet use for electric bicycle riders under the age of 18 under Section 291C-150, HRS.

Other sections that may warrant consideration for electric bicycles are: Sections 293-1; 293-2; and 291C-141 through 149, HRS.

Mixing a motorized vehicle with non-motorized traffic on shared-use paths or sidewalks will create a safety issue similar to Segways on sidewalks and mopeds on bicycle paths. In addition, revising the definition of "bicycle" would make it inconsistent with the definition in the National Uniform Vehicle Code, Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), and American Association on State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) publications. These publications guide the design of our bicycle facilities which is based on a design vehicle (bicycle) that is human-powered with typical paved level terrain speeds of 8-15 mph. It is recommended that the speed of the electric bicycles be required to match the human powered bicycles.

Another concern is that the bill does not address how these electric bicycles would be regulated to keep them at the required maximum speed and not bring about a similar problem we have with mopeds that are modified to exceed 30 mph. It is recommended that a penalty for modifying an electric bicycle so it travels faster be added.

Finally, there is concern that the bill does not prevent children from riding electric bicycles. Since these vehicles can weigh 100 pounds, it is recommended that a minimum age for use be added.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.