



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

LATE

March 13, 2019
1:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Room 225

S.C.R. 19 / S.R. 14
REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU TO CONDUCT A STUDY
ON THE NECESSITY OF VEHICLE SAFETY INSPECTIONS IN HAWAII.

Senate Committee on Transportation

The Department of Transportation (DOT) offers **comments** on S.C.R. 19 / S.R. 14.

Although new vehicles have greater safety features than older vehicles, the vehicle inventory on Hawaii's roads does include older vehicles. Moreover, as vehicles age through daily road use, there is a need to check those items the vehicle safety inspection program currently inspects, on an annual basis, to improve the safety of vehicles operating on our roads.

In 2018, a total of 1,029,430 motor vehicles were inspected statewide by Hawaii's Vehicle Safety Inspection Program. A total of 246,783 defects were identified through the inspection program which needed to be corrected.

The DOT believes Hawaii's Vehicle Safety Inspection Program provides the benefit of ensuring that vehicles meet the safety standards for such items as tires and wheel alignment, brakes, steering and suspension systems, window tint, windshield wipers, headlamp and brake lamps, etc. so that those vehicles are safer on our roads. The program also ensures that the vehicles are insured and properly registered.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

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Director

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LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU
State of Hawaii
State Capitol, Room 446
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Written Comments

SCR19

REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU TO CONDUCT A STUDY ON THE NECESSITY OF VEHICLE SAFETY INSPECTIONS IN HAWAII

Charlotte A. Carter-Yamauchi, Director
Legislative Reference Bureau

Presented to the Senate Committee on Transportation

Wednesday, March 13, 2019, 1:00 p.m.
Conference Room 225

Chair Inouye and Members of the Committee:

The purpose of this measure is to request the Legislative Reference Bureau to study the necessity of vehicle safety inspections in Hawaii. Specifically, the measure requires the Bureau to:

- (1) Study the feasibility of eliminating or modifying vehicle safety inspections in Hawaii; and
- (2) Conduct a review of the laws of other states that have enacted laws eliminating or modifying vehicle safety inspections.

The measure also requests that the Bureau submit a report of its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2020.

While the Bureau takes no position on the merits of the measure, we submit the following comments for your consideration.

The Bureau has no particular expertise with respect to automotive mechanics or accident investigation. Further, as currently drafted, the measure provides no guidance

regarding how to assess or determine the "feasibility of eliminating or modifying vehicle safety inspections in Hawaii[.]" As a result, the Bureau is unaware of what evidence would need to be gathered, what factors would need to be considered, or what methodology would need to be employed to determine the potential effects of repealing or otherwise amending current state law regarding vehicle safety inspections.

We note that section 286-16, Hawaii Revised Statutes, relegates to the Department of Transportation the power and duty to "prescribe uniform standards and procedures for motor vehicle inspection, driver licensing, and registration, including the form and content of records to be maintained for the registration of vehicles and for the licensing of drivers." We further note that, pursuant to section 286-5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, the Director of Transportation is designated as Chairperson of the Hawaii Highway Safety Council, which advises the Governor on "matters relating to the programs and activities of the State in the field of highway safety."

The Bureau believes that a review of the laws of other states regarding vehicle safety inspections is manageable. However, it appears that, given its inherent expertise regarding highway safety and the inspection of motor vehicles, the Department of Transportation would be the more appropriate agency to conduct an assessment of the feasibility of eliminating or modifying vehicle safety inspections in Hawaii, and further, that such an assessment should occur prior to any other action taking place by the Bureau or the Legislature.

Thank you again for the opportunity to submit written comments.