

SENATOR CHRIS LEE, CHAIR
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

RE: S.R. NO. 195

Thursday 3/25/2021
3:00 pm, Room CR 224 & Videoconference

Aloha,

My name is Suzanne Kapuamailani Kaulia. I am a current student of UH Mānoa, participating in the BSW Program at the Thompson School of Social Work and Public Health through Distance Education. I am a lifelong resident and descendent of Kona, from South to North.

I am submitting my written testimony in regards to S.R. NO 195, “Requesting the department of transportation to evaluate Kuakini Highway and Queen Kaahumanu Highway between Henry Street and Kamehameha III road on Hawai‘i Island and conduct a feasibility study regarding traffic reduction by widening the highway or other alternative means.”

I STAND IN OPPOSITION TO S.R. NO 195. As I had mentioned above, I am a descendant of Kona and I have been a lifelong resident. I am also a frequent user of this particular area of the state highway in which this resolution is requesting an evaluation for a possible expansion. I oppose this resolution because although Kona’s population is growing, we should be considering resolving this issue by placing a cap on the residential population of Hawai‘i Island, instead of furthering developmental plans. Instead of expanding the highway, we should be exploring options of limiting visitors throughout the year. We should not be expanding our highways, instead we should be encouraging people to carpool and limiting the amount of car rentals to visitors through car rental companies. We could also resolve this through another avenue of creating jobs for locals by offering the visitors share rides or rentals through local car rental companies instead of these big car rental corporations. There are so many other avenues and resolution ideas that should be considered and tested before we decide to make an irreversible mistake of destruction through constructing and development.

In conclusion, this resolution states many facts about the rapid growth of the population in Kona. It did not mention that the busiest and most traffic constraining times are in the morning and afternoon hours. In my personal opinion, there are no safety issues here. The residents of Kona should be used to traffic congestion at these certain times of a day, if they want to be at work on time they need to take these congested road hours into consideration, and leave early to add to the travel times between their work and home. Again, I stand in opposition to S.R. NO 195.

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