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Testimony of Hawaii Council of Mayors

on

H.B. 1413, HD1

Relating to Abandoned Vehicles

Abandoned Vehicles; Outstanding Charges and Fines; Motor Vehicle Registration; Vehicle Transfer of Ownership; Driver's License

Wednesday, February 23, 2022

2:30 P.M.

VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

ROOM 308

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

The Hawaii Council of Mayors strongly supports H.B. 1413 which allows the director of finance of a county to require payment of outstanding charges and fines owed to the county relating to the disposition of an abandoned vehicle within the county by the registered owner of the abandoned vehicle before issuing a certificate of registration or completing a transfer of ownership, except under certain circumstances. It further requires the county directors to notify the appropriate county examiner of drivers of individuals who have outstanding charges and fines owed to the county relating to the disposition of an abandoned vehicle, who shall have their licenses revoked, suspended, or prohibited from being renewed.

This legislation will effectively deter vehicle owners from abandoning their vehicles and will assist counties to recover the high cost of towing, storage and disposal of abandoned and derelict vehicles. Counties tow and manage a disproportionately high number of abandoned vehicles per year. Abandoned vehicles cause public safety hazards on our public streets and islands. Operational funds expended per year per county varies but can average approximately \$1,000,000.00, due to additional cost for vehicle cleanouts, special cleanups, and related costs. This measure will significantly assist the counties with recouping expenses of removing abandoned and derelict vehicles from public roadways and properties.

Thank you for allowing the Hawaii Council of Mayors to testify in support of Bill 1413.

Hawaii Council County of Mayors

Derek Kawakami, Mayor, Kauai County

Rick Blangiardi, Mayor, City and County of Honolulu

Mitch Roth, Mayor, Mayor, Hawaii County

Michael P. Victorino, Mayor, Maui County

HCOM President, Mayor Michael P. Victorino (808-270-7855)

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

REIKO MATSUYAMA, DIRECTOR

MICHELLE L. LIZAMA, DEPUTY DIRECTOR



DEREK S.K. KAWAKAMI, MAYOR
MICHAEL A. DAHLIG, MANAGING DIRECTOR

Testimony of Reiko Matsuyama Director of Finance, County of Kaua'i

Before the
Committee on Finance
February 23, 2022 at 2:30 pm
308 Via Videoconference

In consideration of **House Bill 1413 HD1** **Relating to the Registration of Vehicles**

Honorable Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the Committee:

The Finance Department of the County of Kaua'i **supports** HB 1413 HD1, which allows the director of finance of a county to require payment of outstanding charges owed to the county for the towing, removal, or disposal of an abandoned or derelict vehicle within the county before issuing a motor vehicle certificate of registration.

The County of Kaua'i, like many other jurisdictions, has a major issue with abandoned and derelict vehicles. While our Kaua'i Police Department (KPD) is faced with addressing the towing and removal of these vehicles, the motor vehicle division is trying to work closely with KPD to address the root cause of the issue.

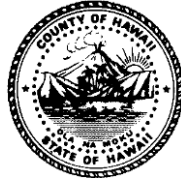
In preliminary discussions with KPD, they have a difficult time enforcing the collection of outstanding towing and related costs. In addition, there are recurring offenders who litter our island with cars. When their names were mentioned in our meetings, our motor vehicle staff indicated that they are regularly in the DMV transferring and registering vehicles.

While the HRS grants the Finance Director with leverage over some outstanding citations, it does not give authority over charges related to the towing, removal, and disposal of abandoned and derelict vehicles. If we were able to turn away these recurring offenders from transferring and/or registering vehicles, it would either force them to pay the bills that are now being absorbed by KPD or it would prevent them from improperly disposing these additional vehicles.

It is for these reasons, that we **support** HB 1413 HD1. Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.

Mitchell D. Roth
Mayor

Lee Lord
Managing Director



Ramzi I. Mansour
Director

Brenda Iokepa-Moses
Deputy Director

County of Hawai'i

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

345 Kekūanāo'a Street, Suite 41 · Hilo, Hawai'i 96720 · cohdem@hawaiiicounty.gov

Ph: (808) 961-8083 · Fax: (808) 961-8086

February 22, 2022

Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair
Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair, and
Members of the House Committee on Finance

Chair Luke and Committee Members,

The County of Hawai'i Department of Environmental Management supports HB 1413, HD1, to address the problem of abandoned vehicles in all counties.

While this measure primarily impacts the operations of the counties' finance departments, to which we will defer, abandoned vehicles are a visual blight on our landscape, degrade our island environment, and burden taxpayers with the cost of disposal. DEM supports the intent of this bill to ensure that the scofflaws who abandon these vehicles are responsible for their proper disposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ramzi Mansour".

Ramzi Mansour
Director, Department of Environmental Management
County of Hawai'i

MICHAEL P. VICTORINO
Mayor

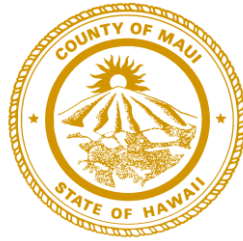
ERIC A. NAKAGAWA, P.E.
Director

SHAYNE R. AGAWA, P.E.
Deputy Director

MICHAEL KEHANO, P.E.
Solid Waste Division

SCOTT R. ROLLINS, P.E.
Wastewater Reclamation Division

TAMARA L. FARNSWORTH
Environmental Protection &
Sustainability Division



**COUNTY OF MAUI
DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT**

2145 KAOHU STREET, SUITE 102
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793

February 22, 2022

TESTIMONY OF TAMARA L. FARNSWORTH
COUNTY OF MAUI, MANAGER OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION & SUSTAINABILITY
DIVISION

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Wednesday, February 23, 2022, 2:30 p.m.
Via Videoconference

In consideration of **HOUSE BILL 1413 HD 1 RELATING TO ABANDONED VEHICLES**
Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair
Honorable Members of the Committee on Finance

The County of Maui Department of Environmental Management stands in **STRONG SUPPORT**
of HB 1413 HD 1 which relates to abandoned vehicles and a hold on registration and licenses.

This bill will serve to put a "hold" on registrations or license renewals for those who owe outstanding charges on abandoned vehicles for which they are named as the registered owner. This bill will be crucial and most effective because it will act as a deterrent and preventative measure as well hold those who abandon vehicles accountable for the expenses incurred by their actions. The bill also protects those whose vehicles were reported stolen.

Counties have faced difficulties in recovering fees, even when accounts are sent to collection agencies. County of Maui currently only recovers about 14% of outstanding balances. While this is of great fiscal significance, just as important—or even more so—may be the aspect of deterrence. When vehicle owners are aware that they will be prevented from making a new car legal and held financially accountable for abandoning their vehicle wrongfully, they may be more likely to dispose of their old vehicles safely and legally through County programs that can help them to do so. We believe that this bill will be extremely effective as a preventative measure, which is why we have been advocating for this type of legislation for many years.

Therefore, we urge this committee to pass this bill without reservation in order to recover costs and significantly decrease the number of abandoned vehicles that must be addressed in Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony **in strong support of HB 1413 HD 1.**



DEREK S.K. KAWAKAMI, MAYOR
MICHAEL A. DAHLIG, MANAGING DIRECTOR

POLICE DEPARTMENT COUNTY OF KAUAI



TODD G. RAYBUCK, CHIEF OF POLICE
STAN R. OLSEN, DEPUTY CHIEF OF POLICE

Testimony of Roderick B. Green
Captain, Patrol Services Bureau
Kauai Police Department

Before the
House Committee on Finance
February 23, 2022, 2:30 pm
via Videoconference

In consideration of
HB1413 HD1
Relating to Abandoned Vehicles

Honorable Chair Sylvia Luke, Honorable Vice Chair Kyle T. Yamashita, and Members of the Committee:

The Kauai Police Department (KPD) **strongly supports** passage of House Bill 1413 HD1 as it establishes the means for counties to create financial accountability for vehicle owners who leave their abandoned vehicles on the side of the road and walk away with impunity.

One of the most difficult aspects of trying to hold owners accountable for their abandoned vehicles is the previous owners not ensuring that the vehicle title has transferred to the new owner. KPD receives several calls a week of registered owners claiming they no longer own vehicles, only to find out the person they sold or gave the vehicle to never put the title in their name.

For the foregoing reasons, KPD strongly supports passage of HB 1413 HD1. Thank you for your time and consideration.



HB-1413-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2022 12:08:37 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2022 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Councilmember Yuki Lei Sugimura	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Several years ago, I tried to set legislation similar to this and was not successful I commend the work done on this legislation and I hope the Legislature will support this to help deter the irresponsible people who abandon vehicles and are not held responsible for their actions.

I support HB 1413

Yuki Lei Sugimura

Councilmember, Maui County

HB-1413-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2022 10:32:35 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2022 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
P Hauoli'ipo Wright	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I fully agree that the director of finance of a county should require the registered owner of a vehicle to pay any outstanding charges and fines owed to the county relating to the disposition of an abandoned vehicle before issuing a certificate of registration or completing a transfer of ownership, except under certain circumstances. Further, considering that the County of Hawaii (at least) assists each registered owner with 2 "no charge" vehicle disposals per year, I also agree that the county examiner of drivers be allowed to suspend, revoke, or prohibit the renewal of the driver's license of that owner.

HB-1413-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2022 11:50:40 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2022 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Renee Rabb	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I totally support HB1413 by Rep. Ilegan which will require people to pay their abandoned vehicle fines prior to renewing their driver's licenses or from registering another car. It's a real shame that people somehow believe that they can behave irresponsibly and that there will be no consequences for their action.

I believe that the best solution for the abandoned car problem would be for the state to address the expense of legal, responsible vehicle disposal. Then conscientious people can get rid of junk cars more easily.

Until that time, we have to enforce penalties against illegal vehicle abandonment. This bill provides some tools to do that.

HB-1413-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2022 12:26:49 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2022 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Barbara Cigainero	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Committee Chair and Members: I am writing in support of HB 1413 that would require the payment of fines and penalties related to abandoned vehicles prior to renewal of vehicle registration of driver licenses. In the Puna Region of the Big Island of Hawaii we have a severe abonded vehicle problem. The enforcement of penalties and fines related to abonded vehicles would be an important tool for the government to have to reduce the problem. The increased collection of penalties and fines would help the Counties with additional resources to look for other solutions to this growing problem.

I urge your support for this legislation. Mahalo, Barbara Cigainero, Keaau, HI 96749.

HB-1413-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2022 1:34:02 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2022 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Julia Lindbergh	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support HB 1413. Julia Lindbergh

HB-1413-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2022 1:52:31 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2022 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Allen Bartolome	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

i support the passing of this bill

Hawai'i State Association of Counties (HSAC)
Counties of Kaua'i, Maui, Hawai'i, and City & County of Honolulu
Website: hawaiicounties.org | Email: hsac@hawaiicounties.org



Testimony of the

Hawai'i State Association of Counties

on

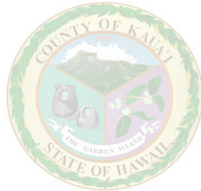
H.B. No. 1413, H.D.1

Relating to Abandoned Vehicles.

Committee on Finance

Wednesday, February 23, 2022, 2:30 p.m.

State Capitol Room 308



The Hawai'i State Association of Counties (HSAC) strongly supports H.B. 1413, H.D.1, which:

- Requires, as a condition for the registration or transfer of ownership of a motor vehicle, the payment of outstanding charges and fines relating to the disposition of an abandoned vehicle; and

Requires the notification of the examiner of drivers to suspend, revoke, or prohibit renewal of the driver's license of individuals with outstanding charges and fines owed to the county relating to the disposition of an abandoned vehicle.

The growing volume and number of complaints about abandoned vehicles taxes the counties ability to post, tow and dispose of abandoned vehicles in a timely and efficient manner, and the costs relating to abandoned/derelict vehicles continue to grow. The counties need the authority to levy and collect all charges related to towing, removal, and disposal of abandoned and derelict vehicles, including the authority to deny recurring offenders from transferring and/or registering vehicles unless their outstanding charges have been paid.

For these reasons the Hawai'i State Association of Counties strongly supports H.B. 1413, H.D.1, and requests your favorable consideration of this measure.

HB-1413-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2022 9:18:16 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2022 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Todd Reilly Sr	Nanawale BOD	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

Your support on this necessary legislation to clean up our neighborhood is an essential piece to stop the dumping of abandoned vehicles on our streets.

Mahalo

Todd Reilly

HB-1413-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2022 11:42:10 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2022 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Judith Ann Tang	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HB 1413 is a perfect way to deter people that abandon their cars to think twice about it. I am sick and tired of seeing cars dumped and left to rot. It makes our neighborhoods look like poor trash live there. Puna is a beautiful part of the state yet it looks like a third-world country with abandoned cars. Taking away a driver's license and fines are a great way to help stop people with no accountability.

HB-1413-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2022 11:55:34 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2022 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Becky Jones	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

The provisions outlined in the bill are reasonable and a good step in the continuum of addressing abandoned vehicles. The next step is to provide adequate funding to the agencies who have boots on the ground, because you can have all the regs and laws you won't but they are meaningless without the ability to provide enforcement. Like most laws, it is the law abiding citizen who will sit up and take notice. Those who are at the core of the biggest part of this problem will be unaffected without enforcement.

HB-1413-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2022 11:59:04 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2022 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Eda Motonaga	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Transcribed by Nicky Watts:

"Abandoned Vehicles: there is a whole bunch of abandoned vehicles. It makes the landscape look like trash. I wish the bill would pass to get the attention that they need. They need to be given a fine to be responsible for their actions. Or they could put it in a place where it could be used for parts rather than just leave it in an land. If they had one area that the abandoned cars could be dropped off so that people could use the parts that would be better. The money could help with the community. They probably left their trash, their envelopes in their car, and they should get a big fine. They just trash the whole land. You have to respect the land. If they leave the abandoned car, other people come and take parts and then they're leaving the trash car."

HB-1413-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2022 12:42:47 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2022 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Nicole Watts	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support HB 1413 because there is a gap within vehicle registration that allows criminals and negligent vehicle owners to take advantage of a lack of accountability when not properly disposing of their vehicles. They have no real repercussion for dumping their vehicle because they will be able to replace the vehicle and register it with no questions and this bill works to resolve that. This bill will start to close that gap, giving power to the DMV to restrict access to vehicle ownership for those who have been caught abandoning their vehicles. This will prevent some people from dumping their cars, will encourage reporting cars when they're stolen, and paying closer attention to vehicle transactions, to prevent future problems.