

**TESTIMONY BY:**

JADE T. BUTAY  
DIRECTOR

Deputy Directors  
ROSS M. HIGASHI  
EDUARDO P. MANGLALLAN  
PATRICK H. MCCAIN  
EDWIN H. SNIFFEN

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

February 1, 2022  
3:00 P.M.  
State Capitol, Teleconference

**S.B. 2896**  
**MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR HIGHWAY WIDENING**

Senate Committee on Transportation:

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S.B. 2896 appropriates funds to the Department of Transportation (DOT) to widen Queen Kaahumanu Highway and Kuakini Highway between Henry Street and Kamehameha III Road on the island of Hawaii.

The DOT **supports** S.B. 2896 and offers comments. The DOT supports efforts to improve the operations and capacity of its roadways. However, even with the additional funds provided by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the needs of the State Highway System exceed our available resources. Because of this, the DOT has identified safety and preservation projects as being the highest priority for funding. Adding new capacity (e.g., adding additional lanes) typically falls under the capacity program. Capacity is identified as a need and potential improvements are identified in the Hawaii Long Range Land Transportation Plan. For safety projects to be considered for the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, the project should be identified from the Highway Safety Improvement Program.

The DOT previously started a study during which it was determined that widening Kuakini Highway from two to four lanes would require acquisitions for over 150 property owners and funding in excess of \$150 million. The DOT terminated the study due to infeasibility. The resolution requests the DOT add an additional lane and implement contraflow measures. As mentioned by the bill, the DOT estimates that these improvements can be implemented for approximately \$30 million. If the Legislature appropriates \$30 million in general funds, the DOT estimates that the requested improvements can be implemented.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



CRAIG K. HIRAI  
DIRECTOR

GLORIA CHANG  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM  
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND  
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE**  
P.O. BOX 150  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE  
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND  
MANAGEMENT DIVISION  
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION  
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT (OFAM)

**WRITTEN ONLY**  
TESTIMONY BY CRAIG K. HIRAI  
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE  
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION  
ON  
SENATE BILL NO. 2896

**February 1, 2022**  
**3:00 p.m.**  
**Via Videoconference**

**MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR HIGHWAY WIDENING**

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on this bill.

Senate Bill No. 2896 appropriates an unspecified amount of general funds in FY 23 to the Department of Transportation (DOT) for the widening of Queen Kaahumanu Highway and Kuakini Highway between Henry Street and Kamehameha III Road on the island of Hawai'i. DOT indicated that the estimated cost of adding one additional lane and contraflow measures is \$30,000,000.

This bill also mentions that this project can be funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law which included \$100,000,000,000 to invest in the nation's roads, bridges, and major infrastructure projects. It is unknown if DOT intends to fund this project with both general funds and federal funds. Defer to DOT regarding the appropriate source of funding for this project.

If general funds are to be used, B&F notes that the federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act requires that states receiving Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) II funds and Governor's Emergency Education Relief II funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and
- Higher education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

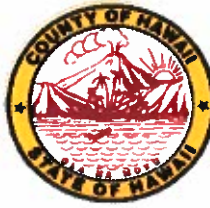
Further, the federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act requires that states receiving ARP ESSER funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and
- Higher education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

The U.S. Department of Education has issued rules governing how these maintenance of effort (MOE) requirements are to be administered. B&F will be working with the money committees of the Legislature to ensure that the State of Hawai'i complies with these ESSER MOE requirements.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Mitchell D. Roth  
Mayor



Lee E. Lord  
Managing Director

Robert H. Command  
Deputy Managing Director

County of Hawai'i  
Office of the Mayor

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**LATE**

February 1, 2022

Chair Sen. Chris Lee  
Vice-Chair Sen. Lorraine Inouye  
Senate Committee on Transportation  
Hawai'i State Legislature  
415 S. Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

**Subject: S.B. 2896 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE HAWAII STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR THE WIDENING OF QUEEN KA'AHUMANU HIGHWAY**  
**Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 1, 2022 at 3:00 p.m.**  
**Time/Place of Hearing: Via Video Conference**

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and members of the Senate Committee on Transportation;

On behalf of the County of Hawai'i, I am expressing my unequivocal support for SB 2896, for fiscal year 2022-2023 which appropriates funds to the State Department of Transportation for the widening of Queen Ka'ahumanu Highway and Kuakini Highway between Henry Street and Kamehameha III Road in Kailua-Kona, County of Hawai'i.

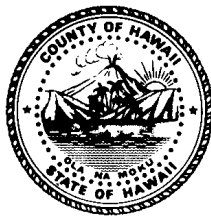
The County of Hawai'i regards this appropriation as critical to achieving our transportation infrastructure goals in West Hawai'i as this improvement will significantly alleviate congestion and enhance safety to this heavily trafficked roadway.

Your utmost consideration and support of this important bill would be sincerely appreciated. Please feel free to contact me for any additional information.

Mahalo,

Mitchell D. Roth  
Mayor  
County of Hawai'i

**Holeka Goro Inaba**  
Council Member, District 8, N. Kona



Office: (808) 323-4280  
Email: holeka.inaba@hawaiicounty.gov

## HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL

County of Hawai'i  
West Hawai'i Civic Center, Bldg. A  
74-5044 Ane Keohokalole Hwy.  
Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740

January 31, 2022

Committee on Transportation  
Senator Chris Lee, Chair  
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair

Re: Testimony in support of SB2896, MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR  
HIGHWAY WIDENING  
Videoconference Hearing: February 2, 2022 at 3:00 p.m.

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the above referenced Committee,

On behalf of myself and constituents of Council District 8 in North Kona, I would like to express support for the above referenced bill, and submit a brief testimony as follows:

We support this measure that would appropriate funds to the Department of Transportation to widen Queen Ka'ahumanu Highway and Kuakini Highway between Henry Street and Kamehameha III road. There is an increase in the number of accidents brought on by the "bottleneck" where Queen Ka'ahumanu and Kuakini highways merge, which has and continues to, compromise the safety of this community.

This widening is consistent with the Department of Transportation's priorities and would serve the safety and public welfare interests of the State.

I strongly urge the passing of this appropriation to widen Queen Ka'ahumanu and Kuakini Highways for the safety of our West Hawai'i and Island community.

Sincerely,

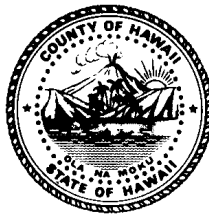
A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Holeka Goro Inaba".

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HOLEKA GORO INABA, Council Member  
District 8, North Kona

HGI.wpb

REBECCA VILLEGAS  
Council Member  
District 7, Central Kona



PHONE: (808) 323-4267  
FAX: (808) 323-4786  
EMAIL: [Rebecca.villegas@hawaiicounty.gov](mailto:Rebecca.villegas@hawaiicounty.gov)

## HAWAI‘I COUNTY COUNCIL

*West Hawai‘i Civic Center, Bldg. A  
74-5044 Ane Keohokalole Hwy.  
Kailua-Kona, Hawai‘i 96740*

January 31, 2022

TESTIMONY OF REBECCA VILLEGAS  
COUNCIL MEMBER, HAWAI‘I COUNTY COUNCIL  
ON SB 2896, RELATING TO MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR HIGHWAY WIDENING  
Committee on Transportation  
Committee on Ways and Means  
Tuesday, February 1, 2022  
3:00 p.m.  
Via Videoconference

Aloha Chair Lee, Chair Dela Cruz, and Members of the Committees:

I thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 2896, a measure making an appropriation for highway widening. My testimony is submitted in my individual capacity as a member of the Hawai‘i County Council and Chair of the Hawai‘i County Council Climate Resilience and Natural Resource Management Committee.

The purpose of this measure is to establish and appropriate the necessary funds to the Department of Transportation to widen Queen Kaahumanu Highway and Kuakini Highway between Henry Street and Kamehameha III Road on the Island of Hawai‘i.

The specific areas of these roadways are two of the main throughfares for Kailua-Kona. SB 2896 is the SB 1011 SD1 Bill we supported last year with additional support from the State of Hawaii Department of Transportation’s Director Jade T. Butay, and numerous members of our community. With the passing of our nation’s \$100 Million Infrastructure Law we are grateful to revisit this important issue with new funding opportunities.

Queen Kaahumanu Highway and Kuakini Highway are the most viable and the quickest routes for our emergency vehicles to utilize. These highways are not equipped with sidewalks and in some areas have less than a 2-foot shoulder. The US DoT Federal Highway Administration’s Safety Page shows that shoulders provide a number of important functions to include but not limited to: providing space for emergency vehicles, law enforcement activities, maintenance activities, and bicycle lanes. Without the widening of these highways our community will continue to be subject to untimely delays and potentially hazardous conditions.

Our 3<sup>rd</sup> option to drive this route is on Ali'i Drive, which is in our Tsunami Evacuation Area. The 2020 Census shows our Hawaii Island population with over 200,000 residents, an increase of 15,550 since the 2010 Census. Our community desperately needs to widen and expand Queen Kaahumahu highway and Kuakini highway as these are the evacuation routes for the area with the most residents and tourists per capita.

For the reasons stated above I urge the Committee on Transportation and the Committee on Ways and means to support this measure as well. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (808) 323-4267.

Mahalo for your consideration.



Rebecca Villegas  
Council Member, Hawai'i County Council