

TESTIMONY BY:

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

February 10, 2022
3:00 P.M.
State Capitol, Teleconference

S.B. 3255
RELATING TO HIGHWAYS

Senate Committee on Transportation

The Department of Transportation (DOT) provides **comments** on this measure that seeks to appropriate funds for capital improvement projects in the Waianae district to address traffic mitigation.

The DOT supports efforts to improve the resiliency, mobility, accessibility, and safety of the transportation system. However, the DOT has concerns with this proposal as there have been numerous studies conducted to evaluate alignments for a parallel route in the Waianae area. Those studies have consistently determined a second parallel route would be infeasible due to the many challenges and impacts including significant environmental, social, archaeological, and cultural impacts, complications due to mixed land ownership, and an extremely high cost to and time frame to implement; in some estimations, \$500 million or more. The DOT recommends that we focus on improving the route that we have, Farrington Highway, by adding a 5th lane from Helelua to Mohihi. The project will not provide a second route, but will improve quality of life significantly, and can actually be done for \$30 million within 5 years of kicking off the project.

Regarding the proposed pedestrian overpasses, two of the proposed locations have raised crosswalks, the other three are signalized. We do not recommend placing a pedestrian overpass where there is an existing raised crosswalk or traffic signal. Additionally, the Farrington Highway Corridor Study, completed in 2021, identified problems and potential solutions through a series of 'aina meetings, collaboration with area students, as well as coordination with stakeholders, elected officials, and agencies. Through this collaborative planning process, pedestrian overpasses were not identified as a potential pedestrian safety improvement.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



Environmental Caucus of The Democratic Party of Hawai'i

Thursday, February 10, 2022

To: The Honorable Chris Lee, Chair
The Honorable Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Transportation

Re: **SB 3255 – RELATING TO HIGHWAYS**
Hearing: Thursday, February 10, 2022, 3:00 p.m., Via Videoconference
Position: **Strong support**

Aloha, Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committees on Transportation:

The Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i stands in strong support of SB 3255. This measure would appropriate funds via general obligation bonds, for capital improvement projects in the Waianae district to address traffic mitigation.

Farrington Highway is the only major roadway on O'ahu's leeward coast, and not surprisingly, its traffic volume has increased from 20,000 vehicles to day in 2000, to 50,000 vehicles per day in 2016. To help mitigate traffic congestion, a parallel roadway should be built to allow for an alternative route for quick entrance to or exit from the Waianae district during times of emergencies. Farrington Highway is at risk of being impassable in times of storm damage, vehicular accidents, and even daily rush hour traffic. This dangerous condition needs to be alleviated.

In addition to traffic congestion, pedestrians crossing Farrington Highway can be very challenging and dangerous as, unfortunately, people oftentimes do drive with excessive speed throughout that stretch of highway. Pedestrian overpasses are necessary structures to help alleviate traffic flow disruptions and increase pedestrian safety.

For these reasons, the Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i supports SB 3255 as it appropriates funds for a parallel roadway and for the development of 5 pedestrian overpasses strategically placed along Farrington highway to promote maximum pedestrian safety. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Melodie Aalaja

Alan Burdick

Co-Chairs, Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i
Email: legislativepriorities@gmail.com



Email: communications@ulupono.com

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
Thursday, February 10, 2022 — 3:00 p.m.

Ulupono Initiative supports SB 3255, Relating to Highways.

Dear Chair Lee and Members of the Committee:

My name is Micah Munekata, and I am the Director of Government Affairs at Ulupono Initiative. We are a Hawai'i-focused impact investment firm that strives to improve the quality of life throughout the islands by helping our communities become more resilient and self-sufficient through locally produced food; renewable energy and clean transportation; and better management of freshwater and waste.

Ulupono supports SB 3255, which appropriates funds for capital improvement projects in the Wai'anae district to address traffic mitigation.

However, we want to caution that just building a new road may not solve for congestion nor help the cited low-income and/or transit-dependent populations. For example, extensive nationwide research demonstrates that widenings and new highways do not solve for congestion over the longer term. In its 2020 *The Congestion Con* report, national transportation advocacy group, Transportation for America, demonstrated that over the past 20 years, no region anywhere in the country has been able to build itself (i.e., widen or build new roads) out of congestion, regardless of population trends or road building activity. The same is true for Honolulu, where congestion has been up 166 percent since 1993 against a population growth rate of 23 percent.¹

Ignoring this research may also exacerbate our climate and transportation challenges. It is more likely that this project would induce more miles driven, if care is not paid to ensuring that we are moving more people, and not just vehicles. In fact, some research indicates that a 15-mile new route in Honolulu could result in an additional 46-68 million more miles driven per year, the equivalent of 5,300 new passenger cars on the road.²

¹ <https://t4america.org/maps-tools/congestion-con/>

² <https://shift.rmi.org/>

This does not negate the need for additional access to and from the Wai‘anae district, but rather ensures that if significant investments are made, they solve to provide true improved access to opportunity and housing, rather than just moving vehicles.

In addition, we also urge the reconsideration of pedestrian overpasses as a pedestrian safety improvement. The Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP) succinctly summarizes why pedestrian bridges are not actually for pedestrians.

“Pedestrian bridges are structures built over roads that require people to take longer, often inaccessible routes up and over many lanes of car traffic, without impeding the speed or movement of vehicular traffic. Proponents of these structures argue that these bridges are made for the safety of pedestrians, by moving pedestrians out of the way of speeding cars. In reality, by displacing people, pedestrian bridges simply reinforce the dominion of vehicles over people on the streets. Pedestrian bridges discourage walking and cycling and worsen road safety for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists. Separating people from the street reinforces the prioritization of personal motor vehicles, while encouraging speeding, driver negligence, and traffic fatalities.”³

Furthermore, HDOT’s 2021 Farrington Highway Corridor plan doesn’t advocate for such investments. Instead, it prioritizes a wide range of safety, congestion, and resilience measures over the short, medium, and long-term. Notably these investments would cost \$109M but serve the entire corridor’s identified problems as compared to the \$150M for just the overpasses.⁴

We urge the Committee to ensure that the parallel route take such factors into consideration.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata
Director of Government Affairs

³ <https://www.itdp.org/2019/10/01/pedestrian-bridges-make-cities-less-walkable-why-do-cities-keep-building-them/>

⁴ <https://hidot.hawaii.gov/highways/files/2021/04/210323-Farrington-Highway-FINAL-Corridor-Study.pdf>



February 9, 2022

**To: Sen. Chris Lee, Chair
Sen. Lorrainne r. Inouye, Vice Chair & Members of the
Committee on Transportation**

**From: Kali Watson
President/CEO
Hawaiian Community Development Board
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813**

**Re: Hearing on SB 3255
Relating to Highways (funding for overpasses)
February 10, 2021 at 3:00 pm
Videoconference**

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT

Dear Chairman Lee & Vice Chair Inouye of the Committee on Transportation, and Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of **SB 3255** relating to appropriating funds for capital improvement projects in the Waianae district to address traffic mitigation. The idea of building pedestrian overpasses is not only a great idea for traffic mitigation, but more importantly, one of safety. There have been one to many traffic accidents along Farrington Highway. While this has been discussed in the passes and supported, none have been built. It is now time to give priority to this safety initiative. The Waianae Coast has been the step child too long. With over \$1 billion in surplus funds, this would be a good use of it, along with any other federal funds coming to Hawaii. We support this bill because it makes sense and the time is now.

Hawaiian Community Development Board is a nonprofit focusing primarily on helping beneficiaries of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act of 1921, but also works with non-beneficiaries.

I urge you to please pass measure **SB 3255**.

Pupuka I Holomua (United in order to progress),

Kali Watson
President/CEO
Hawaiian Community
Development Board (HCDB)

Chairman of the Board
Richard Soo

Secretary/Treasurer
Jackie Burke

Board Members
Linda Ahue
Duane Hewlen
Puni Kekauoha
Alfred "Bobby" Willing
Helen O'Connor

President/CEO
Kali Watson

Senior VP
Patti Barbee



LATE

Submitted to
The Committee on Transportation
Senator Chris Lee, Chair
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair
February 08, 2022

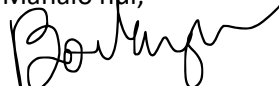
Bikeshare Hawaii (BSH) is Honolulu’s Bikeshare System (aka Biki) and has generated almost 5 million cycling trips statewide by over 300,000 cyclists during the last five years. Public bikeshare has facilitated more of our members to **save money** by riding bikeshare each year with 63% of all members reporting such savings during our recent survey (vs. 58% in prior survey). Additionally, during the 2018 Biki Member Survey, the Anthology Group reported “When segmented by ethnicity, **Native Hawaiians were the most likely to notice a decline in weight**, as a result of Biki [bike] usage.”

BSH submits the following comments on and supports the current version of this Senate Bill currently under discussion by the Hawaii State Legislature’s Committee on Transportation (10 February):

- **SB 3255: Relating to Highways**

BSH supports the adoption and implementation of SB 3255 which will appropriate funds for capital improvement projects in the Waianae district to address [motor vehicle] traffic mitigation; [such projects should include local transit enhancements, complete sidewalk network, enhanced intersections and protected bike lanes].

The Waianae Coast should be a great bike community, as much of it is flat and its schools, parks, homes and community retail are located within easy bike distances (<2 miles); and have the greatest social benefit from such improvements, as its population is skewed younger and with higher proportion of Native Hawaiians than other Honolulu districts...but the deficient roadway facilities, higher proportion of vehicle speeding and poor traffic safety outcomes keeps many Waianae residents from utilizing active transportation and thus driving more, often the most expensive cost per trip mode. If Waianae was bike friendly, then the option of cycling would be more realistic AND allow more Waianae households to adopt cycling into more of their trips. For example, in more bike friendly neighborhoods, a household of five (5) could buy 1 month of Biki memberships for everyone for the same price of one (1) \$80 adult monthly bus pass.

Mahalo nui,

Todd Boulanger
Executive Director

Todd Boulanger,
Executive Director

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as a Top US
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February 8, 2022

Attention: Henry J. C. Aquino and members of the House Committee on Transportation

CC: Senator Maile Shimabukuro, City Council member Andria Tupola and Representative Cedric Gates

Hawaii State Capitol

415 S Beretania Steet

Honolulu, HI 96813

Regarding: Support of SB 3255 “Appropriates funds for capital improvement projects in the Waianae district to address traffic mitigation”.

I strongly endorse & support SB 3255 (https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session2022/bills/SB3255_.htm) and I encourage you to explore this testimony and ask that you support this initiative as well.

Various sections of Farrington Highway are extremely exposed and vulnerable and pedestrian safety is known to be compromised along the entire route. As the contents of the proposed bill suggests, this is the only way in and out of this area for the local community and for emergency response.

The affected community spans nine different Ahupua`a. It stretches from Nankuli all the way north-west, beyond Makaha beach and Kepuhi Point, past Kea'au Beach Park, Waikomo, Mākua, Keawaula and Ka`ena.

Maintaining the status quo with regards to this infrastructure would directly impact the continued safety and well-being of the community at large and continues to place an enormous burden on the existing (often compromised) infrastructure, leading to faster deterioration and further exacerbating the challenges we, the residents, face on a daily basis.

Furthermore, coastal resilience to climate change has been neglected severely over the decades, as such, there is little to no recourse for the local communities and visiting guests, should we be faced with a catastrophic event. These threats are identified and assigned a high criticality in the Transportation Asset Climate Change Risk Assessment Project report issued by OahuMPO in November 2011

(https://oahumpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/CC_Report_FINAL_Nov_2011.pdf), refer specifically to section 6.0, pages 60 to 68. This report is over a decade old and it already identified the criticality of this infrastructure and the high risks associated and almost nothing has been accomplished in that time, to safeguard this community and develop the degree of resilience required.

It is imperative that we safeguard the coastline's critical transportation infrastructure against the ravages of climate change (erosion and sea level rise) and traffic congestion (with associated safety implications) and enhancing the resilience needed by the communities that live in that area by implementing the required changes, some recommended in the 90's, such as the recommendations put forth in the Makaha Beach Park Master Plan Report, prepared for the Department of Parks and Recreation by Pacific Architects, Inc. on March 1998 -

<https://oahumpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Makaha-Beach-Park-Master-Plan-Report-1998.pdf>

Our State Legislature need to ensure adequate emergency egress for the community, as identified in the recommended scope described in the Waianae Coast Emergency Access Road Environmental Assessment - <https://oahumpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Waianae-Emergency-Access-Road-EA-2002.pdf>

The absence of an alternate route and the lack of public infrastructure to support the degree of isolation that would ensue, if this road were to become compromised for longer duration would dramatically affect everyone along this route and cut off access to emergency services, medical care providers, work, grocery stores, schools, churches, social services, critical public infrastructure, etc.

Finally, the need for improved infrastructure and infrastructural resilience has not shown any signs of diminishing. If anything, it has been reinforced by recent studies that delve into the effects of climate change on our coastline and the risk of isolation for a large segment of the community, in the event of this road becoming impassable.

Mahalo

Pete Meinster, concerned resident Makaha

SB-3255

Submitted on: 2/8/2022 7:38:14 PM

Testimony for TRS on 2/10/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry **STRONGLY OPPOSE SB 3255.**

HDOT improved Farrington Hwy. by installing “traffic utility lights, raised crosswalks, relocation of bus stops, and adding speed humps” along Farrington Highway overtime and with community input. SB 3255 is fiscally irresponsible of \$150M. The \$150M best use in direct classroom learning and school improvements in failing public education along the Waianae Coast. The problem is NOT pedestrian safety BUT SPEEDING VEHICLES!

- 1. Waianae High School should be relocated from its current location makai-side of Farrington Highway to a new location due to sea level rise concern.** Recent improvements fronting the high school are “speed humps, raised cross-walk, and traffic utility lights” installed by HDOT for pedestrian safety.
2. Waianae Small Boat Harbor, recent improvements fronting the boat harbor are “speed humps, traffic utility lights and raised cross-walk” installed by HDOT for pedestrian safety.
3. Puhano Street, recent improvements by HDOT by “moving the bus stop closer to the traffic utility light cross-walk.” Two traffic utility lights at the corner of Puhano Street/Farrington Hwy. for pedestrian safety.
4. Waianae Intermediate School, recent improvements by HDOT with “traffic utility lights, raised cross-walk, and speed humps” fronting the school for pedestrian safety.
5. Maliona Street, HDOT installed a “traffic utility light” making it safer for pedestrian crossing Farrington Hwy.

STRONGLY OPPOSE SB 3255

There was a pedestrian over passes located on Farrington Highway and Nanakuli Ave, which was removed years ago. Nanakuli ES was relocated on the mauka-side of Farrington Hwy. in Nanakuli and eventually the pedestrian over passes was dismantled.

