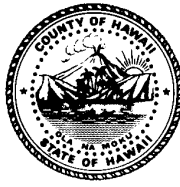


**Mitchell D. Roth**  
Mayor



**John C. Andoh**  
Mass Transit  
Administrator

## County of Hawai'i Mass Transit Agency

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March 21, 2022

### **TESTIMONY REGARDING METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS COMMENTS ON SR159 AND SR167**

The County of Hawai'i Mass Transit Agency would like to offer comments regarding SR159 and SR167. It is commendable that the Legislature is recognizing the growth of Hawai'i County based on previous action of the County Council. Since urbanization will be coming to Hawai'i County in the next 20 years, the formation of a metropolitan planning organization (MPO) is important. We appreciate the commitment from the County Council per Resolution 262-21 and the intent of this resolution. We offer the following for comment in regard to these resolutions:

WHEREAS, the Infrastructure Investment Jobs Act has allocated \$358 million to the Metropolitan Planning Organization Highway Planning Funding and \$107 million to Metropolitan Planning Organization Transit Planning Funding to expend within the next five years; and

WHEREAS, the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1962 required that metropolitan planning organizations be established to serve as a forum for collaboration among local communities and government agencies and to direct federal funds toward projects that increase access to opportunity and prosperity through improved multimodal pedestrian, bicycle, and transit options; and

WHEREAS, metropolitan planning organizations are designated by agreement between the governor and local governments that together represent at least seventy-five percent of the affected population, including the largest incorporated city based on population, or in accordance with procedures established by applicable state and local law; and

WHEREAS, the Hawai'i Department of Transportation has the responsibility to support statewide transportation goals in the State and work together with the counties to accomplish transportation goals in their respective islands; and

WHEREAS, there are two established metropolitan planning organizations operating in the State of Hawai'i, one located in

the County of Maui and the other in the City and County of Honolulu; and

WHEREAS, according to the 2020 United States Census data, 200,629 people reside in the County of Hawai'i, where the ability to deliver quality public transportation services is hampered by the sheer geographic distance between urban and rural areas; and

WHEREAS, in December 2021, the Council of the County of Hawai'i passed Resolution No. 262-21, urging the ~~County's~~ Department of Planning and Sustainable Development to assess the feasibility of establishing a metropolitan planning organization for the County of Hawai'i; and

WHEREAS, in June 2022, data points for urbanized areas will be made available by the United States Census ~~and such data will be provided to the United States Department of Transportation and the Governor of the State of Hawai'i for determination of metropolitan planning organization formation for urban areas of 50,000 or greater and the County of Hawai'i is expected to reach the population threshold of fifty thousand people for Kailua-Kona, Hilo, and Puna;~~ and

WHEREAS, when the population for Kailua-Kona, Hilo, or Puna exceeds forty-five thousand people, the ~~Hawai'i~~ Department of Transportation is requested to begin the interim process of establishing a metropolitan planning organization with the County of Hawai'i ~~and complete a self-certification proposal to indicate that the County of Hawai'i has met all federal requirements for the Federal Transit Administration in cooperation with the Governor in accordance with 23 U.S.C. §134(b) and 49 U.S.C. § 5303 (c), Federal laws and;~~ and

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of the policy board of the metropolitan planning organization to make decisions that are the result of the continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process and the organization's staff to support and provide technical resources to the policy board; and

WHEREAS, the County of Hawai'i does not have a metropolitan planning organization; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-first Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2022, the House of Representatives concurring, that the Department of Transportation is urged to convene an intergovernmental task force to ~~recommend policy and provide guidance to assist the County of Hawai'i to establish and certify form a metropolitan planning organization or a regional transportation planning organization should County of Hawai'i not meet the thresholds of~~

the formalization of a metropolitan planning organization in the 2020 census; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Transportation is urged to provide the intergovernmental task force with a list of highway projects to be executed within the next four years from the State Transportation Improvement Program to support the development of the metropolitan planning organization's transportation improvement program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the intergovernmental task force is requested to submit a report of its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, *if needed after review of existing state and federal regulation*, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2023; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the task force be dissolved upon submittal of its report; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Director of the State Department of Transportation, Mayor of the County of Hawai'i, ~~and~~ Councilmembers of the County of Hawai'i *and the Directors of Mass Transit Agency, Planning and Public Works of the County of Hawai'i.*

As previously stated, a Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) can provide an alternate venue for rural transportation planning and access to funding provided by the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration in the event that the County of Hawai'i does not receive an urbanized area in the 2020 census. Details on RTPOs are available here: <https://ruraltransportation.org/about-rtpo/rtpo-states/> and [https://www.planning.dot.gov/documents/RTPO\\_factsheet\\_master.pdf](https://www.planning.dot.gov/documents/RTPO_factsheet_master.pdf)

You may reach me at 808.961.8555 or email [john.andoh@hawaiicounty.gov](mailto:john.andoh@hawaiicounty.gov) with any questions on this testimony.

Mahalo,



John Andoh,  
Mass Transit Administrator & General Manager

**SR-159**

Submitted on: 3/19/2022 8:24:04 PM

Testimony for TRS on 3/22/2022 3:20:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Gerard Silva	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The people on Hawaii are not Interested in this at All any one conected to this will be Removed.November is comeing Fast!!