



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

IN REPLY REFER TO:

February 2, 2023  
3:00 P.M.

State Capitol Conference Rm 224 & Teleconference

**S.B. 1086**  
**State Highway Safety Council**

Senate Committee on Transportation

---

The Department of Transportation (DOT) would like to **provide comments** regarding S.B. 1086. This measure amends the composition and duties of the state Highway Safety Council (SHSC).

This bill states that the federal government requires a highway safety advisory board to make recommendations to the governor and department of transportation to reduce deaths and injuries. However, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) does not require this as a part of the Highway Safety Plan (HSP).

The current composition of the SHSC consists of members that are appointed as required by statute in addition to a diverse group of individuals who have a wealth of experience and knowledge that spans across all aspects of the transportation industry.

The highway safety section has already begun planning for the Federal Fiscal Year 2024 through 2026 HSP, which includes a request for grant proposals, community input traffic safety survey, data analysis of traffic injuries and fatalities, and project prioritization based on the final rule under CFR 1300. If it is the intent of this council to review projects which are submitted as a part of the Highway Safety Plan, chairing the council by either a member of the house or senate transportation committees may conflict with the legislative calendar. This is because any review conducted by this council would need to occur prior to our annual review by NHTSA, which usually occurs within the first two weeks of April.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



Email: [communications@ulupono.com](mailto:communications@ulupono.com)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION & CULTURE & THE ARTS  
Thursday, February 2, 2023 — 3:00 p.m.

**Ulupono Initiative supports SB 1086, Relating to Transportation.**

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 choices, and better management of freshwater resources.

**Ulupono supports SB 1086**, which amends the composition and duties of the State Highway Safety Council.

Nationwide, traffic fatalities are the highest they have been in 16 years and are generally expected to continue to increase, mostly due to auto-centric road design, reduced peak congestion, and increasing larger and heavier vehicles.<sup>1</sup> Hawai'i is also experiencing this same troubling trend. In 2014, there were 95 deaths in Hawai'i, while in 2022 there were 117 deaths.<sup>2</sup> Last year alone, Hawai'i County's fatalities tripled in just one year.<sup>3</sup> In addition, people walking and biking are demonstrably more at risk—Hawai'i ranks 13<sup>th</sup> among the most dangerous states for pedestrians, a ranking that has worsened over the past 20 years.<sup>4</sup>

As Hawai'i's transportation needs are increasingly complex and challenging, we appreciate this committee's efforts to look at bolstering safety policies for all ground transportation users.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata  
Director of Government Affairs

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.vox.com/22675358/us-car-deaths-year-traffic-covid-pandemic>

<sup>2</sup> Hawaii Department of Health

<sup>3</sup> <https://hidot.hawaii.gov/highways/safe-communities/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/dangerous-by-design/>