



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

February 7, 2023  
3:00 PM  
State Capitol, Room 224 & Videoconference

**S.B. 517**  
**RELATING TO MOTORCYCLES**

Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts

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The Department of Transportation (DOT) **opposes** S.B. 517 to allow motorcycles to use shoulders a minimum of three feet wide during peak traffic hours for the following reasons:

1. Reduces safety for all roadway users. The shoulder is utilized to accommodate stopped vehicles, emergencies, and on arterial roadways, bicyclists, and pedestrians. Allowing a motorcycle to use the shoulder creates new conflicts, uncommon expectations, and potential for crashes with existing shoulder users or uses (i.e., pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, emergency response personnel & vehicles, construction/maintenance workers & equipment, vehicles involved in crash, stalled vehicles, roadway debris, drainage overflow, and traffic enforcement).

On arterial roadways, pedestrians crossing at an unsignalized intersection will be more challenging as motorcycles travelling on the shoulder and/or moving back into the normal travel lane can take away gaps in traffic used by crossing pedestrians or take away shoulder space for pedestrians to safely walk or wait on. S.B. 517 creates a less safe environment for everyone especially our vulnerable road users and has the potential to increase all types of crashes;

2. Increases potential for road rage. Providing preferential treatment for motorcycles has the potential to anger motorists who are waiting patiently in traffic. S.B. 517 will allow operators of motorcycles to queue jump even if traffic is flowing; and
3. Adds to vehicle delays. Motorcycles merging back into traffic will create more disruptions in the traffic flow that will result in longer travel times. Near signalized intersections, this could cause drivers to wait an additional traffic signal cycle. On freeways, motorcycles have the benefit to use HOV and shoulder lanes.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION SERVICES  
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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J. ROGER MORTON  
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JON Y. NOUCHI  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

TESTIMONY OF J. ROGER MORTON  
DIRECTOR OF TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND  
CULTURE AND THE ARTS

**Tuesday, February 7, 2022, 3:00 PM, Via Videoconference**

TO: Senator Chris Lee, Chair, and Members of the Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts

RE: TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO SENATE BILL 517, RELATING TO MOTORCYCLES

The Department of Transportation Services (DTS) of the City and County of Honolulu (City), offers testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 517, relating to motorcycles.

DTS strongly opposes Senate Bill 517 that would allow motorcycle operators to have full use of any shoulder lane with a minimum three-foot width during peak traffic hours, whether on State highways or City streets, on the basis of safety and operational concerns.

DTS provides multimodal transit services including fixed route bus service and Handi-Van, or paratransit service, for persons with disabilities who are unable to use fixed route service throughout Oahu. City buses and the Handi-Vans operate on time deadlines that provide riders with a level of reliability that the riders depend upon from the City's public transit system, and must, as a matter of operational flexibility, use the left and right lanes to take advantage of the restricted high occupancy travel times during peak traffic hours, and to enter and exit the high-speed, controlled-access highways as well as the non-controlled access State and City surface streets. As a result, the bill would bring motorcycle operators, City buses, Handi-Vans, and private bus fleet operators into convergence in the left and right lanes during peak traffic hours as they may intersect the shoulder lanes while managing the restricted spaces, entering and exiting the highways, and turning on surface streets. This convergence raises safety concerns and could cause major traffic accidents resulting in critical injuries, if not loss of life, and significant traffic disruptions and delays in City bus operations.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony in opposition.

February 6, 2023



Michael Ferreira  
State Legislative Chair  
Street Biker's United,  
Oahu, Hawaii

RE SB517 Relating to Motorcycles

We are in support of the sun-setted previously enacted similar . What allow it to sunset was a lack of the State Department of Transportation erecting signs notifying motorists that motorcycles may be using the shoulder lane at various times. We suggest the following amendments:

IN REGARD to paragraph "B" The department of transportation did not follow through the last time with just warning signs covering "designated" shoulders as there was not study done to identify those shoulders. The Bill was amended to identify any shoulder at least 3 feet wide to accommodate a motorcycle.

FURTHER,

Other instances where a motorcycle could utilize a shoulder While using hazard flashers would be during any heavy traffic traveling less than 25 miles per hour and not just during commute hours and would include any traffic accident that would slow traffic.

IN CONCLUSION,

We ask that the Bill be amended to read that in paragraph "A" to read "

**§ 291C-155 Operating motorcycles on the designated shoulder.** (a) During times of heavy traffic where the speeds are under 25 miles per hour, all motorcycles are entitled to full use of the shoulder; provided that the shoulder is a minimum of three feet wide to accommodate the motorcycle, and the that operator shall use emergency flashers while traveling on the shoulder. The operator shall re-join other traffic when the speed of traffic is 25 miles per hour or more.

(b) The Department of Transportation shall create signage (traffic control devices) and will allow for private motorcycle organizations to fund those signs under an "adopt a freeway" program to alert the public that there may be motorcycles on the shoulder at any time.

Respectfully Submitted



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SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION  
Tuesday, February 7, 2023 - 3:00pm

**LATE**

**Hawai'i Bicycling League Opposes SB517, Relating to Motorcycles**

Aloha Chair Lee and Committee Members,

My name is Travis Counsell, and I am the Executive Director of the Hawai'i Bicycling League (HBL). We are a non-profit organization founded in 1975 with the mission of enabling more people to ride bicycles for health, recreation, and transportation. We strive to create communities across our islands that have safe, accessible, and inclusive environments for people to bike, walk, and roll. This means creating infrastructure that is designed for all users with safety as a top priority.

**Hawai'i Bicycling League opposes SB517**, which authorized operators of motorcycles to utilize the lane shoulders that are at least three feet wide while using emergency flashers.

It seems the intention of this bill is to allow people who ride motorcycles to use the shoulder lane to avoid traffic. Many of our highways lack adequate space for shoulders to be used in this manner. Additionally, the shoulder is often used by people who walk and bike, which would result in unnecessary conflict between users and potentially unsafe interactions.

If this bill was amended to allow this only on interstate highways (H1, H2, H3) where non-motorized use is prohibited, HBL would not oppose this bill. However, given its current wording we are concerned regarding the safety of vulnerable users if shoulders are used as an additional travel lane for people riding motorcycles.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony. Please oppose SB517 and help create safer streets for all.

Ride Aloha,

**Travis L. Counsell**  
Executive Director  
Hawai'i Bicycling League

TO: Members of the Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts

FROM: Natalie Iwasa  
808-395-3233

HEARING: 3:00 p.m. Tuesday, February 8, 2023

SUBJECT: SB 517 – Motorcycles in Shoulder Lanes – **COMMENTS**

Aloha Chair Lee and Committee Members,

Thank you for allowing the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 517, which would allow motorcyclists to use shoulder lanes as long as the lane is at least three feet wide and the motorcyclist uses emergency flashers.

As a bicyclist, I am concerned how this would impact other roadway users, i.e., bicyclists and pedestrians. I'm trying to picture what it would be like having a couple of pedestrians walking along the shoulder with a bicyclist coming and then a motorcyclist trying to use the same space.

This doesn't sound like a good idea to me.

**SB-517**

Submitted on: 2/6/2023 6:41:50 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/7/2023 3:00:00 PM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pete Tingstrom	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of the sun-setted previously enacted SB 517. What allow it to sunset was a lack of the State Department of Transportation erecting signs notifying motorists that motorcycles may use the shoulder lane at various times. I suggest the following wording/amendments:

**§ 291C-155 Operating motorcycles on the designated shoulder.**

(a) During times of heavy traffic where the speeds are under 25 miles per hour, all motorcycles are entitled to full use of the shoulder; provided that the shoulder is a minimum of three feet wide to accommodate the motorcycle, and the that operator shall use emergency flashers while traveling on the shoulder. The operator shall re-join other traffic when the speed of traffic is 25 miles per hour or more.

(b) The Department of Transportation shall create signage (traffic control devices) and will allow for private motorcycle organizations to fund those signs under an “adopt a freeway” program to alert the public that there may be motorcycles on the shoulder at any time.

Mahalo,

Pete Tingstrom