



March 23, 2023

3 p.m.

Conference Room 224 and Videoconference

**To: Senate Committee on Transportation, Culture and the Arts**

**Senator Chris Lee, Chair**

**Senator Lorraine Inouye, Vice Chair**

**From: Grassroot Institute of Hawaii**

**Ted Kefalas, Director of Strategic Campaigns**

RE: SCR145/SR136 — REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO STUDY THE FEASIBILITY AND ADVISABILITY OF ELIMINATING THE STATE'S SAFETY INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS FOR MOTOR CARRIER VEHICLES.

***Comments Only***

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii would like to offer its comments on [SCR145/SR136](#), which would request the state Department of Transportation to conduct a study on whether Hawaii's annual vehicle safety inspections should be abolished.

Across the country, only 15 states require safety inspections every year.<sup>1</sup> It is clear that mechanical failures are the cause of only 3% of accidents nationwide,<sup>2</sup> but research on whether mandatory inspections reduce traffic accidents has yielded unclear results.

A study on the end of vehicle inspections in New Jersey found that "vehicle safety inspections do not represent an efficient use of government funds, and do not appear to have any significantly mitigating effect on the role of car failure in traffic accidents."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Christina Walsh, "[Why Do Some States In the USA Have Vehicle Safety Inspections?](#)" VINSmart, Nov. 8, 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Alex Hoagland and Trevor Woolley, "[It's No Accident: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Vehicle Safety Inspections.](#)" Contemporary Economic Policy, 2018, p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

Hawaii's Legislative Reference Bureau studied the issue in 1995 and concluded: "There is no conclusive evidence to indicate that the State's periodic motor vehicle inspection program either is or is not achieving its desired outcome."<sup>4</sup>

In 2019, the state Senate passed [Senate Resolution 14](#), which directed the state Department of Transportation to conduct its own study of mandatory inspections. Since this report was never conducted, we believe this resolution would be a step toward assessing the value of Hawaii's vehicle inspection regime.

As it stands, Hawaii's vehicle inspection laws are a burden in terms of time and cost, and especially burden low-income families who must pay for car checkups every year. Given this expense, mandatory inspections should create some appreciable public benefit to have any justification.

A study of their effectiveness would shine a light on whether inspections reduce traffic accidents, and would help inform the Legislature on whether to keep the annual inspections around.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Ted Kefalas  
Director of Strategic Campaigns  
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

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<sup>4</sup> Keith Fukumoto, "[Periodic Motor Vehicle Inspection in Hawaii: A Study of Selected Issues](#)," Legislative Reference Bureau, Report No. 7, 1995, p. 45.

**SR-136**

Submitted on: 3/20/2023 3:09:14 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/23/2023 3:01:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Andrew Crossland	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this Resolution.