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COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 S. HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.MauiCounty.us

February 6, 2024

TO: The Honorable Representative Chris Todd, Chair, and
Members of the House Committee on Transportation

FROM: Alice L. Lee
Council Chair 

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF FEBRUARY 8, 2024; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF
HB1856, RELATING TO TRAFFIC REGULATION**

The Maui County Council **supports** this measure to authorize each county to adopt ordinances restricting the use of streets, roads, thoroughfares and highways that are hazardous or may impact sensitive areas.

This measure is in the Hawai'i State Association of Counties' 2024 Legislative Package, which the Maui County Council voted to support; therefore, I offer this testimony on the Council's behalf.

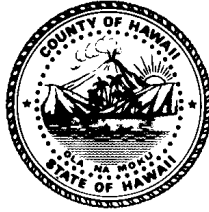
The County Council supports this measure for the following reasons:

1. Empowering counties to regulate or restrict access to hazardous streets will promote public safety.
2. Empowering counties to regulate or restrict access to private streets when necessary to protect sensitive areas, such as endangered species' habitat, cultural, and archaeological sites, will further the State's environmental goals.

Thank you for your consideration.

ocs:proj:legis:24legis:24testimony:hb1856_paf24-002(38)_ebm

HEATHER L. KIMBALL
COUNCIL CHAIR
Council District 1 (North Hilo,
Hāmākua, and portion of Waimea)



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HAWAI‘I COUNTY COUNCIL

25 Aupuni Street, Ste. 1402.
Hilo, Hawai‘i 96720

February 7, 2024

House Committee on Transportation
Honorable Representative Chris Todd, Chair
Honorable Representative Darius K. Kila, Vice Chair

RE: Support of HB 1856

Dear Chair Todd, Vice Chair Kila, and Members of the Committee on Transportation:

As the Chair of the Hawai‘i County Council, I thank you for the opportunity to submit **testimony in SUPPORT of HB 1856**, relating to traffic regulation. This legislation would authorize the counties to adopt ordinances to managed access to certain streets, highways, thoroughfares, or roads in the best manner to protect health and safety, and environmentally and culturally sensitive areas for their unique and specific island communities.

Waipio Vally Road in my district of Hawaii Island was originally a donkey trail. It was developed into a narrow, cliff hugging road by the sugar plantation. When the plantation went under, this sub-standard road was conveyed to the county and is now a public road. Waipio Valley Road is said to be the steepest rural road in the country, with some area of grades approaching 45%, yet before the pandemic the number of vehicles per day using this road topped 500 and the number of pedestrians using the reached as high as 350. Many of these folks were visitors, who had no idea of the road’s dangers, nor did they understand that the bottom of the valley is all private land.

I bring up this specific example to illustrate the desperate need of the counties to be able to develop management plans for access of these types of roadways. In this particular case, the community has been working for decades on a way to manage access. When they saw the success of the Hanea model on Kauai, they were hopeful for a similar program here. After several consultations with our legal advisors, we concluded that we needed the help of the legislature to enable the county to create such a program.

I will say that I think this bill may still need some refinement. This is not an authority that we in the counties plan to use widely, so we are supportive of any amendments that would limit the scope of the authority as the legislature deems necessary to protect the interests of the public.

Hawai‘i County is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.

There may also be the need to define some of the terms included in the current draft of the bill. We are more than willing to work on those amendments with the legislature as well.

I do urge that this committee continue to improve and move HB1856 through the legislative process. I am certain we can come to a final bill that will be amenable to all involved. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony. If you would like to discuss my knowledge of this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Heather Kimball". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

HEATHER L. KIMBALL



Testimony of the
Hawai‘i State Association of Counties
H.B. No. 1856
Relating to Traffic Regulation

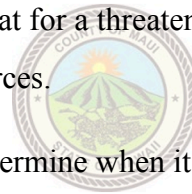
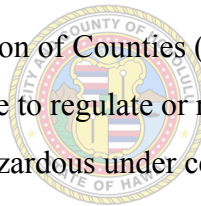
Committee on Transportation

Thursday, February 9, 2024, 9 a.m.

The Hawai‘i State Association of Counties (HSAC) **supports** H.B. 1856, which authorizes the counties by ordinance to regulate or restrict access to a street, highway or roadway that is known to be hazardous or hazardous under certain conditions; or which may have a negative impact on a sensitive area such as the critical habitat for a threatened or endangered species or lands containing cultural or archaeological resources.

Although chapter 286 authorizes the governor to determine when it is in the public interest to delegate highway safety programs to the counties, we maintain that the counties have the highway safety and knowledge of local conditions to determine the highway safety programs that should be implemented.

For these reasons, the Hawai‘i State Association of Counties strongly supports H.B. 1856 and requests your favorable consideration of this measure.



HB-1856

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 1:43:43 PM

Testimony for TRN on 2/8/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chauncey Hatico, Vice President Waipio Taro Farmers Association	Waipio Taro Farmers Association	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Chauncey Hatico, Vice President Waipio Taro Farmers Association and I represent the Waipio Valley Community. I am writing this testimony in support of HB1856. We support this bill as it will give the county authority to establish a management plan for the Waipio Valley road as it would authorize counties to adopt ordinances to regulate or restrict access to certain streets, highways, thoroughfares, or roads.

Mahalo,

Chauncey, WTFA Vice President

HB-1856

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 7:54:34 PM

Testimony for TRN on 2/8/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
jim cain	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Todd and committee members,

My name is Jim Cain, for 37 years my family and I have called Waipi'o Valley on Hawai'i Island our adopted home. We farm taro on our six acre farm and operate a family run poi shop. I fully support hb1856 that gives the counties the authority to manage dangerous substandard roads especially that can lead to negative impacts to culturally sensitive areas such as Waipi'o Valley. Our community has been working diligently to find solutions to the negative impacts that have severely impacted our precious wahi pana of Waipi'o from too much traffic on the very steep and dangerous, mostly one lane Waipi'o Access Road that was never meant to handle the very bad mix of traffic of pedestrians, rental jeeps and farmers trucks loaded with taro. Also the culturally inappropriate trampling of sacred sites and burial sites within this historically important valley is completely unacceptable, especially to the born and raised lineal descendents and families who have called this area home for centuries. HB 1856 will be a valuable tool going forward as we continue to put together a management plan that will provide a better way to receive folks who visit the area, creating culturally appropriate programs for education and sharing, and creating resources to take care of this precious valley. Please pass HB 1856 out of committee and support our community to continue in our efforts to malama. Mahalo, Jim Cain

HB-1856

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 10:00:27 PM

Testimony for TRN on 2/8/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bill Stormont	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Todd, Vice Chair Kila, and members of the House Committee on Transportation. I offer this testimony in support of HB 1856, which will provide the counties enhanced ability to restrict access to streets, highways, and thoroughfares in their respective counties when necessary to protect the public from hazardous conditions or potentially impact sensitive natural or cultural resources. The measure provides mechanisms, via the conducting of public hearings, to ensure necessary public input is solicited prior to actions taken.

Mahalo for you favorable consideration of this measure.

Bill Stormont, Hilo