



**STATE OF HAWAI'I | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION | KA 'OIHANA ALAKAU  
869 PUNCHBOWL STREET  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-5097**

February 8, 2024  
3:10 p.m.  
State Capitol, Room 224

**S.B. 3012  
RELATING TO MOTOR VEHICLE SAFETY INSPECTIONS**

Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts

The Hawaii Department of Transportation (HDOT) **opposes S.B. 3012**, which lengthens the time period in which certain vehicles must have a safety inspection.

The HDOT opposes this bill as our Periodic Motor Vehicle Inspection for the number of vehicles that failed show that even newer vehicles, two years old, had a failure rate averaging 15 percent (see below table for additional years). This demonstrates the need to have safety inspections annually, they prevent equipment failure that may result in a crash, or stalled vehicles that may cause delays for roadway users. Every minute that a lane remains blocked during peak travel times results in 4 minutes of delay, during and even well after the lane is cleared.

Test Year	Model Year	Vehicle Age	Total Tests	Total Failed	Fail Percentage
2023	2018	5	69147	10995	15.9
2023	2019	4	76016	11799	15.52
2023	2020	3	67185	10603	15.78
2023	2021	2	66266	10833	16.35
2022	2017	5	71859	11790	16.41
2022	2018	4	74865	12352	16.5
2022	2019	3	85682	13191	15.4
2022	2020	2	70867	9896	13.96
2021	2016	5	77519	13670	17.63
2021	2017	4	75719	13961	18.44
2021	2018	3	80102	15941	19.9
2021	2019	2	85546	13689	16
2020	2015	5	64993	8579	13.2
2020	2016	4	72687	10277	14.14
2020	2017	3	72365	11459	15.84
2020	2018	2	71657	10272	14.33
2019	2014	5	68463	10559	15.42
2019	2015	4	76234	11983	15.72
2019	2016	3	88121	15636	17.74

2019	2017	2	88497	13881	15.69
2018	2013	5	65145	10554	16.2
2018	2014	4	71712	11975	16.7
2018	2015	3	82525	14905	18.06
2018	2016	2	97194	15354	15.8
2017	2012	5	55827	9610	17.21
2017	2013	4	68866	12152	17.65
2017	2014	3	78617	15333	19.5
2017	2015	2	89216	15388	17.25
2016	2011	5	51711	8565	16.56
2016	2012	4	58002	10310	17.78
2016	2013	3	73558	14073	19.13
2016	2014	2	84646	14877	17.58
2015	2010	5	48834	8160	16.71
2015	2011	4	53177	9156	17.22
2015	2012	3	60886	11865	19.49
2015	2013	2	81686	14254	17.45
2014	2009	5	43637	7764	17.79
2014	2010	4	50613	8767	17.32
2014	2011	3	57548	11086	19.26
2014	2012	2	66694	12449	18.67
2013	2008	5	9624	1676	17.41
2013	2009	4	6393	1081	16.91
2013	2010	3	7973	1342	16.83
2013	2011	2	9189	1519	16.53

Additionally, lengthening the duration between odometer readings and lengthening the time period when the first odometer reading is taken would create difficulties in implementing the per-mile Road Usage Charge (RUC) program in Hawaii. ACT 222 established a RUC beginning with electric vehicles with the eventual inclusion of all passenger vehicles and light duty trucks. To calculate the road usage charge, the mileage traveled for this RUC program will be collected by the odometer readings taken under the existing annual safety inspection process. Furthermore, lengthening the time period in which certain vehicles must have a safety inspection would further burden the costs for low-income families. At the time of payment, the mileage accumulated, and the cost of the driver's RUC will be much greater on a 24 months or 3 year cycle rather than the existing annual payment cycle. Therefore, we recommend that the inspection periods remain unchanged from the current time periods and durations.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Feb. 8, 2024, 3:10 p.m.  
Hawaii State Capitol  
Conference Room 224 and Videoconference

**To: Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts**  
**Sen. Chris Lee, Chair**  
**Sen. Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice-Chair**

**From: Grassroot Institute of Hawaii**  
**Ted Kefalas, Director of Strategic Campaigns**

RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB3012 — RELATING TO MOTOR VEHICLE SAFETY INSPECTIONS

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice-Chair Inouye and Committee Members,

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii would like to offer its comments in support of [SB3012](#), which would extend the period of time before a vehicle safety inspection is required by law from 12 months to 24 months for most vehicles and to three years for new vehicles and motorcycles.

Current law already allows two years before the first safety inspection for new vehicles.<sup>1</sup> This bill would extend that grace period for new vehicles to three years.

For other vehicles covered by subsection “b” of Section 286-26 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes, the grace period between inspections would be extended from one year to two years — except for motorcycles, which would be extended from one year to three years.

As SB3012 states, existing vehicle inspection laws are a burden and expense for Hawaii residents, especially on low-income families who must pay for car inspections every year.

The bill further notes that across the country, only 15 states require safety inspections every year.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [“§286-26 Certificates of inspection,”](#) Hawaii Revised Statutes.

<sup>2</sup> Christina Walsh, [“Why Do Some States In the USA Have Vehicle Safety Inspections?”](#) VINSmart, Nov. 8, 2021.

As for safety, the bill notes that mechanical failures are the cause of 3% of accidents nationwide,<sup>3</sup> but 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>4</sup>

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>5</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. To our knowledge, this report was never conducted — or at least never publicly released — since it is not posted to the department’s website.<sup>6</sup>

In general, SB3012 recognizes the need to create smart regulations instead of overly broad mandates. We commend the introducers and sponsors for introducing this measure and furthering the discussion on vehicle safety checks.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Ted Kefalas  
Director of Strategic Campaigns  
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

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<sup>3</sup> Alex Hoagland and Trevor Woolley, “[It’s No Accident: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Vehicle Safety Inspections](#),” Contemporary Economic Policy, 2018, p. 14.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Keith Fukumoto, “[Periodic Motor Vehicle Inspection in Hawaii: A Study of Selected Issues](#),” Legislative Reference Bureau, Report No. 7, 1995, p. 45.

<sup>6</sup> See “[Reports to the Legislature](#),” Hawaii Department of Transportation, accessed Feb. 6, 2024.