

POLICE DEPARTMENT
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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OUR REFERENCE ST-TK

February 8, 2023

The Honorable Adrian K. Tam, Chair
and Members
Committee on Culture, Arts and
International Affairs
House of Representatives
Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street, Room 309
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Tam and Members:

SUBJECT: House Bill No. 110, Relating to License Plates

I am Stason Tanaka, Acting Major of the Traffic Division of the Honolulu Police Department (HPD), City and County of Honolulu.

The HPD opposes House Bill No. 110, Relating to License Plates.

The HPD opposes the proposal for the use of diacritical markings for Hawaiian words. This will affect the readability of the license plates, especially at a distance. In addition, the license plates can also be used in other states where certain markings may not be recognizable.

The HPD urges you to oppose House Bill No. 110, Relating to License Plates. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

APPROVED:

Sincerely,



Arthur J. Logan
Chief of Police


Stason Tanaka, Acting Major
Traffic Division

LATE

DEPARTMENT OF CUSTOMER SERVICES
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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February 7, 2023

The Honorable Adrian K. Tam, Chair
The Honorable Rose Martinez, Vice Chair
And Members of the Committee on Culture, Arts
& International Affairs
State Capitol, Conference Room 309
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Tam, Vice Chair Martinez, and Members of the Committee on
Culture, Arts, & International Affairs,

SUBJECT: H.B. 110 - Relating To License Plates
HEARING: Wednesday, February 8, 2023, 8:30 a.m.

The City and County of Honolulu, Department of Customer Services (CSD)
strongly supports this bill.

Pursuant to Section 6-402 of the Revised Charter of the City and County of
Honolulu, CSD administers the motor vehicle registration program for the island of
Oahu.

Hawaii Revised Statutes § 249-9.1 allows an individual to select the combination
of letters and numbers for the individual's license plates. However, other than letters,
numbers, and a hyphen, no other characters or punctuation is permitted. As written, the
law does not allow for Hawaiian diacritical marks for Hawaiian names or words.

The Hawaiian language uses two diacritical markings. The 'okina is a glottal stop
and kahakō is a macron, which lengthens and adds stress to the marked vowel. See
<https://www.hawaii.edu/site/info/diacritics.php>. These diacritical markings signal the
proper pronunciation of the Hawaiian name or word.

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Last year, the Legislature passed Act 170 which requires Hawaiian diacritical markings in Hawaiian names and words in official State and County letterhead. We support further expansion of the use of Hawaiian diacritical marks in other aspects of government, including our State license plates.

CSD acknowledges that the Honolulu Police Department has submitted testimony in opposition to this bill. CSD has continued its discussion with HPD regarding this bill and offers the following clarification to the Committee.

The American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA) is a national organization that sets best practices guidelines for, among other things, license plates. AAMVA's *License Plate Standard, Including Best Practices for Managing Vanity and Specialty License Plates*, Second Edition, (October 2020) does not prohibit use of diacritical markings on vanity license plates and does allow for nonstandard keyboard characters to be included on license plates as "graphics."

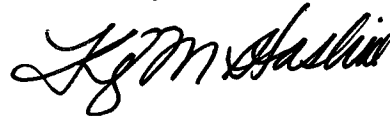
In addition, CSD reached out to AAMVA and its representative confirmed that use of Hawaiian diacritical marks may be included in vanity plates although the markings will not be considered part of the license plate number. The diacritical marks are, and will be considered "graphics" on the license plate.

As "graphics," the 'okina and kahakō are not incorporated into the license plate number, so if the word "Hawai'i" with the 'okina is used for a vanity license plate, the license plate number is recognized as "Hawaii" without the 'okina.

CSD continues to engage with HPD to ease its concern about readability and intends to reach out to other stakeholders as well.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of H.B. No. 110.

Sincerely,



Kimberly M. Hashiro
Director