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

February 20, 2025  
2:00 P.M.  
State Capitol, Room 325 & Video Conference

**H.B. 706, H.D. 1**  
**RELATING TO HIGHWAY SAFETY**

House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

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The Hawaii Department of Transportation (HDOT) **supports H.B. 706, H.D. 1**, which requires persons under the age of 16 to wear a helmet while riding a skateboard. Clarifies that the Act does not infringe on county ordinances prohibiting skateboards on streets and roadways.

According to the Hawaii Department of Health, from 2019 through 2023, there were 11 serious skateboard injuries on our roadways, two of which were under the age of 17 and neither of them were wearing helmets.

According to the National Library of Medicine, wearing a helmet while skateboarding reduces the risk of head injuries by up to 88 percent.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

February 17, 2025

Chair David Tarnas  
House Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs Committee  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 228  
Honolulu, HI 96813

**RE: HB 706\_HD 1 (Takenouchi), Helmet Requirements**  
**Position: Support**

Dear Chair Tarnas,

AAA Hawaii is pleased to support HB 706\_HD1 (Takenouchi), which would require anyone under age 16 to wear a helmet when operating a skateboard on public streets, roadways, bikeways, and any other public properties. If enacted, this bill would align helmet requirements for skateboarding with bicycling, which also mandates helmet use of riders under age 16.

Skateboarding is a fun but risky sport. It requires a high level of balance on a small, unstable platform, meaning even slight disruptions or uneven terrain can easily cause a loss of balance and result in a fall. Skateboarding injuries account for thousands of injuries each year, most involving children. According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, more than 230,000 people with skateboarding-related injuries received emergency treatment at hospitals in 2022 alone. Of those injuries, more than 3 in 10 involved children under the age of 15.

Studies show non-helmeted skateboarders have a 60% greater risk of sustaining an injury than helmeted skateboarders. This means head trauma are the most common type of skateboarding injury, even though wearing a helmet significantly reduces the risk of fatalities and severe head injuries. Accordingly, an increasing number of states are mandating helmet use for minors on streets and other public properties such as skateparks.

AAA Hawaii was founded in 1915 in Honolulu and is a leader in motorist services and a strong advocate for traffic safety. With over 170,000 members in Hawaii and 60 million nationwide, service to and the safety of our members, other motorists, and all road users is our founding and continuing purpose. Helmets alone cannot prevent traffic safety collisions, but they can act as the last line of defense for in preventing serious trauma. From seat belts to helmets, all road users need to stay ready for the dangers around them. We share your effort to improve road safety and appreciate the objective of HB 706. AAA Hawai'i supports HB 706\_HD1 as amended.

Respectfully Submitted,



Marianne Kim  
Senior Public Policy Specialist

1130 N. Nimitz Highway, Suite A170, Honolulu, HI 96817

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## **Testimony in Support of HB706 HD1 Relating to Highway Safety**

February 20, 2025

Lisa Dau, RN, Injury Prevention Coordinator

Keiki Injury Prevention Coalition (KIPC)

Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

Rep. David Tarnas, Chair; Rep. Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair; and Members of Committee.

My name is Lisa Dau, I am a registered nurse and the Injury Prevention Coordinator. I represent Kapiolani Medical Center for Women & Children, and we strongly support HB706, requiring skateboard users under 16 to wear helmets. Skateboarding poses a significant risk of head injuries, which can be prevented by helmet use. Studies show helmets reduce severe head injuries by up to 85%, similar to the success seen with bicycle helmet laws.

While some argue against mandates, safety should be our priority. Just as seat belt and bicycle helmet laws save lives, this bill will protect young skateboarders and reduce preventable injuries.

We urge the committee to pass HB706 HD1 for the well-being of our youth.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa M. Dau".

Lisa Dau, RN, MBA, BSN, CPSTI

Injury Prevention Coordinator

Kapiolani Medical Center for Women & Children

**HB-706-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 2:39:47 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chad Kurashige	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I agree with HB 706. Our family lost our nephew Kameron Steinhoff 12 years ago due to a head injury he acquired while riding a skateboard. Four years prior to Kameron's death, we lost our nephew, Mark Kurashige, also a skateboarding head injury. I believe that we should at least require our youths to protect their heads while riding skateboards and bikes.

**HB-706-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 2:48:14 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Paula Kurashige	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB 706 as a grandmother & retired physical therapist to prevent traumatic brain injuries (TBI) in memory of Kameron Steinhoff and Mark Kurashige.

**HB-706-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 7:51:06 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Wendy Freeman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

i support HB 706 in memory of Kameron Steinhoff. I believe teenagers and children should be required to wear helmets while riding skateboards to prevent traumatic brain injuries (TBI).

**HB-706-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 12:21:42 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ruth Love	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As an ER nurse for 35 years I wholeheartedly approve helmets for all skateboarding people. Wearing helmets decreases the chance of head injury by >80%. Please pass this bill.

Thank you, Mrs Ruth Love