

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION SERVICES
KA 'OIHANA LAWELAWA 'ŌHUA
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR
MEIA



J. ROGER MORTON
DIRECTOR
PO'O

JON Y. NOUCHI
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
HOPE PO'O

TESTIMONY OF J. ROGER MORTON
DIRECTOR OF TRANSPORTATION SERVICES
BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
Tuesday, February 4, 2025, 10:00 AM
Conference RM 430 and Via Videoconference

TO: Rep. Darius K. Kila, Chair, Rep. Tina Nakada Grandinetti, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee on Transportation

RE: SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 958, RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION, WITH COMMENTS

The Department of Transportation Services (DTS), City and County of Honolulu (City), supports House Bill 958, relating to transportation and provides the following comments.

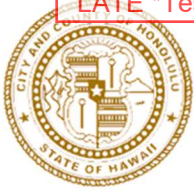
DTS strongly supports the bill's intent to regulate the behavior of electric bicycle users; prohibit riding in an unsafe manner on any public street, alley, or other public right of way; clarify the definition of an electric bicycle in recognition of the industry established class descriptions; establish a new definition for an "electric micro mobility device"; allow riding an electric bicycle on any sidewalk at a speed not exceeding ten miles per hour; and require the use of a helmet by anyone under the age of 18 years of age who operates a bicycle upon a street, bikeway, or any public property. The City Council has recently adopted similar legislation for the City's Traffic Code that is aligned with the bill's intent to regulate safe use of electric bicycles on public streets, and the bill will further provide the City the flexibility to tailor its ordinances to address developing technologies.

DTS appreciates the bill's attentiveness to new devices that are propagating in the mobility sphere quicker than we can define them in legislation, and notes that the establishment of the classes in electric bikes will allow the counties to update and make specific ordinances in line with the state traffic code framework.

DTS notes that, for the proposed definition of "electric micro mobility devices," if the intent is to recognize any new motorized devices, it would be best to have the definition be as broad as practicable in order to be inclusive of new devices. DTS also suggests that since electric micro mobility devices are being added to the section on electric foot scooters, the weight of the micro devices could follow the less than 75 pounds for electric foot scooters, for purposes of consistency.

DTS also notes that on Page 8, Line 20, subsection (f), the requirement of "two hands on handlebars" may not apply to all electric micro mobility devices, and suggests adding the qualifier "if applicable" with respect to handlebars and hands-free operations of applicable devices.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony in support with comments.



HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL
KE KANIHELA O KE KALANA O HONOLULU
530 S. KING ST. STE. 202, HONOLULU, HI 96813

TYLER DOS SANTOS-TAM
HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL
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February 4, 2025

Chair Kila, Vice Chair Grandinetti, & Members of the House Committee on Transportation:

My name is Councilmember Tyler Dos Santos-Tam and I have the privilege of representing parts of Urban Honolulu from Kalihi Valley to Kaka'ako on the Honolulu City Council. I am pleased to provide you with supportive comments on HB958 Relating to Transportation. This measure requires all bicycles equipped with motors to be operated only with all wheels on the ground at all times, outside of specific circumstances, requires those operating a bicycle or electric foot scooter under the age of eighteen to wear a helmet, has an education element, as well as other pieces to create clarity in for the operation of electric bicycles.

We strongly support clear policies that support the safety of our community. This measure creates safe operational standards and requires helmets, which supports health and wellbeing and aligns with the newly passed policies at the City & County of Honolulu, which recently passed Bill 52. It addresses the reckless riding of electric bicycles and requires the use of helmets while operating an electric bicycle for those under the age of eighteen. At the City & County, we strive to put the health of our community first and appreciate the work the State is doing to address the many safety concerns raised by the community in regard to the operation practices of e-bikes.

Furthermore, the measure is an opportunity to clarify that electric bicycles that do not exceed 750 watts may be ridden in all places where bicycles are allowed, including, but not limited to streets, highways, sidewalks, public paths set aside for bicycles, as well as other identified places. This language will clarify that devices exceeding 750 watts should be prohibited from these areas.

I truly appreciate the work that the committee, the bill introducers, and the working group participants have done to advance our policies in regard to electric bikes. With continued collaboration we can create clarity and encourage more people to utilize these alternate types of transportation, which help people to lower their transportation costs and will help to achieve the State climate goals.

The timing is especially appropriate as our county continues to expand the network of bike lanes, making it more convenient and safer for people to participate in bike riding.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony for HB 958.

Aloha,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Tyler Dos Santos-Tam".

Tyler Dos Santos-Tam
Honolulu City Councilmember, District 6

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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Tuesday February 4, 2025 – 10:00am

Hawai'i Bicycling League SUPPORTS INTENT of HB 958, Relating to Transportation

Aloha Chair Kila, Vice Chair Grandinetti, and Committee Members,

My name is Eduardo Hernandez, and I am the Advocacy Director of the Hawai'i Bicycling League (HBL). We are a non-profit organization founded in 1975 with the mission of enabling more people to ride bicycles for health, recreation, and transportation. We strive to create communities across our islands that have safe, accessible, and inclusive environments for people to bike, walk, and roll.

Hawai'i Bicycling League supports the intent of HB 958, especially in regards to updated definitions for safe riding behavior and electric micro-mobility devices. However, this bill has no stated purpose, nor mention that a cornerstone reason to create a new law in this space is in addition to safety, to provide more affordable transportation options for individuals and families. It is our position that language for safe riding behavior and electric micro-mobility devices be added to HB 435 and adopted concurrent with HBL's proposed testimony for HB 435.

Electric bicycles and other low-speed electric mobility devices serve as a way to reduce the costs of living for Hawai'i residents while also working towards the State's climate goals. These devices can reduce the need to own a vehicle, often allowing households to eliminate a vehicle and save upwards of \$10,000 per year. They can also reduce the number of vehicles being used for short trips, therefore reducing parking demand and vehicle traffic.

HBL agrees that there is a need to update our laws and regulations as regards bicycling, roadway use, and emerging technologies including e-mobility devices like e-bicycles. The public deserves safety improvements that are based on data, provide lower cost transportation solutions, and raise awareness that streets and roadways are a shared public resource.

In January, the Honolulu City Council unanimously passed [Bill 52](#) relating to electric bicycles. HBL worked closely with Council Members Dos Santos-Tam and Tulba, as well as serving on the City's Department of Transportation E-Mobility Working Group to hone this legislation. It is based on statewide data and the Working Group's recommendations have been shared with the legislature for your consideration during the 2025 session. HBL encourages you to work from this informed baseline and make improvements that can benefit people across Hawai'i.

In this process, we identified that incomplete and outdated definitions are a problem as regards e-mobility devices including bikes and scooters; that young people are experiencing higher risks;

and that generally more awareness and education is needed to truly impact safety. People under eighteen years of age deserve access to slower speed electric devices as part of their families' overall transportation needs. Given the data, it is reasonable to require helmets for these operators.

We recommend members of the House Committee on Transportation focus on the following guidelines. This is based on our high level of expertise in this subject matter and over 50 years serving the bicycling community statewide including those who choose to walk and roll, as well as working with national and international partners working to advance best practices for transportation safety.

Guidelines for the House Committee on Transportation:

- Update HRS bicycle definitions in traffic code and elsewhere, based on current three tier standards and not outdated U.S. Code § 2085 which was enacted more than 22 years ago and lacks the clarity needed today
- Define out of class vehicles that resemble bicycles and have motors greater than 750 watts and are capable of motorized propulsion at speeds higher than 28 mph should be expressly excluded from bicycle definitions
- Require helmets for individuals under age 18 as a proven safety intervention while operating a bicycle or electric mobility device
- Consider prohibitions on e-bikes for those under 15 to **only class 3** e-bikes and allowing use for class 1 and 2 by all ages, as this is standard across most states
- Define the term "bicycle with motor" in HRS; "bicycle(s) equipped with motor(s) motorized bicycle and bicycle with motor attached" to mean only an electric motor exceeding 750 watts or any combustion engine." These devices should be expressly prohibited from public street, highway, alley, path, or trail, including a bikeway. However, "bicycle with motor" should not include low-speed class 1, 2, or 3, electric bicycles
- Fold in language related to e-mobility micro devices (HB 958) into HB 435, following similar standards as noted above.
- Fold in language related to electric bicycle mobility rebate (HB 670) into HB 435 following similar standards as noted above.

By adopting these recommendations, the Committee on Transportation can create an omnibus bill that addresses the intricately linked matters of safety and affordability. Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important matter.

Ride Aloha,



Eduardo Hernandez
Advocacy Director

HB-958

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 9:50:18 AM

Testimony for TRN on 2/4/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Manabo Sato	Moped Doctors	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Honored Chair, Vice Chair and members of the committee, I am Manabo Sato, co founder and vice president of Moped Doctors, a local moped sales and service shop for 15 years. We at Moped Doctors oppose HB958 as the traffic rules for mopeds have been well established and enforced for many years. Also the definition of motor driven cycle to motor scooter could turn the gas powered moped industry which hundreds of businesses and thousands of employees generating millions of dollars in taxable revenue for this state and which tens of thousands of moped owners rely on daily absolutely upside down. A motor scooter designation could bring additional but not necessary insurance, legal and operating burdens to this industry and all that rely on it so heavily in their daily work and affairs. These points should be segregated from the e bicycle law proposals for better clarity. Please defer this bill.

Thank you

Manabo Sato

VP

Moped Doctors

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February 3, 2025

Rep. Darius K. Kila, Chair
Rep. Tina Nakada Grandinetti, Vice Chair
Committee on Transportation
House of Representatives
33rd Legislature, State of Hawai'i

via: <http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov>

Dear Committee leadership and members,

Re: SUPPORT FOR HB958, RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 4, 2025
Time: 10:00 a.m.
Location: Conference Room 430
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

I write to express support for this proposed legislation. This bill proposes to make appropriate amendments to statutes under HRS Title 17 that will recognize the lawful use and operation of “electric bicycles”, “electric micro mobility devices” (e.g., motorized skateboards), and “electric foot scooters” on Hawaii’s roadways. This bill also would increase the age for mandatory helmet use of such roadway users to persons under 18 years of age. Most importantly, this bill contemplates an appropriation that will fund a coordinated education campaign by the State and counties on “electric mobility devices.” This campaign rightfully could be presented within a larger campaign addressing shared safe use and enjoyment of all roadway users.

Thank you, Honorable committee leadership and members, for your attention to this issue and consideration of my letter. Mahalo.

Sincerely,

/s/ Georgette A. Yaindl
GEORGETTE ANNE YAINDL