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

March 13, 2025  
9:00 a.m.  
State Capitol, Room 430

**S.B. 30**  
**RELATING TO MOPEDS**

House Committee Transportation

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The Hawaii Department of Transportation (HDOT) **supports S.B. 30**, which requires all moped drivers to wear a safety helmet when driving a moped, regardless of age. According to HDOT data, there were 15 moped-related serious injury crashes in 2023.

Of the 15, 11 of those were not wearing helmets. Among the unhelmeted riders, 7 of the 11 sustained head and face injuries. According to the Hurt Study, the use of the safety helmet is the single critical factor in the prevention or reduction of head injury. The National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) has estimated that motorcycle helmets reduce fatalities by 37 percent using data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (NHTSA, 2013).

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

**SB-30**

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 11:23:30 PM

Testimony for TRN on 3/13/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Manabo Sato	Moped Doctors	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

Honored Chair, Vice Chair and esteemed mrmbers of the committee,

My name is Manabo Sato, I am the co founder and vice president of Moped Doctors Inc. We are a local moped sales and repair shop with 15 years of business here in Honolulu and Hawai'i.

We at Moped Doctors oppose SB 30. It is broad, overarching and overreaching to go from having limited moped helmet laws for non rental mopeds , which is the VAST MAJORITY of privately owned mopeds in Hawai'i to suddenly having to force ALL MOPEDED RIDERS to have them regardless of age. Plus there is at least one other house or senate bill put there proposing helmets for moped riders being raised from 18 to 21 and HB537, a superbill proposing mandatory helmets for riders of ALL two wheeled vehicles scooters, motorcycles, mopeds and even electric scooters REGARDLESS OF AGE.

A more nuanced approach makes more sense. Hawaii's beautiful natural environment invites helmets as an option. Some find it more difficult to hear or even see with helmets. And many riders who have never had to wear helmets simply may choose to continue that way. Even without a universal helmet law for mopeds, mopeds as a class of vehicles has the LOWEST RATE OF TRAFFIC FATALITIES compared to cars, motorcycles, even pedestrians according to current Hawaii Dept.of Transportation statistics. If anything a more conservative approach of requiring helmets for up to age 18 to 21 may be a more realistic proposal.

Helmets do improve the potential safety outcome for moped riders , but to FORCE EVERYONE who rides them, not just higher risk age groups is a clear overreach compared to the long established status quo. It also appears to be redundant because of the presence of other similar mandatory helmet bills such as the previously mentioned HB537 .Please defer this proposal. It is unnecessarily too broad.

Mahalo

**SB-30**

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 9:41:26 AM

Testimony for TRN on 3/13/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nathan Bingham	Hawaiian Style Rentals & Sales	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Aloha,**

I respectfully oppose **Senate Bill SB30**, which mandates helmet use for moped riders. This bill raises concerns about **inconsistencies in policy and fairness**.

Mopeds are:

- **Restricted to a single rider** (no passengers).
- **Limited to a 50cc engine**, capping their speed.
- **Operated on roads with speed limits below 45 mph**.

Yet, under current law, **motorcycle riders**—who can carry passengers and travel at much higher speeds—are not required to wear helmets. Additionally, **bicyclists and e-bike riders** are exempt from helmet mandates, despite their exposure to similar or even greater risks in traffic. This inconsistency makes the bill appear **discriminatory** toward moped riders.

As an adult, **helmet use should remain a personal choice**, not a legal requirement. I urge you to consider fairness and consistency in helmet laws across all modes of transportation before moving forward with this legislation.

**Mahalo for your time and consideration.**

**SB-30**

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 10:22:35 AM

Testimony for TRN on 3/13/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Robert Pitman	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Negative Impact on Local Rental Businesses**

The proposed law places an undue burden on rental companies by requiring them to provide helmets to all renters, increasing operational costs.

Tourists and occasional riders may be deterred from renting mopeds due to mandatory helmet laws, negatively impacting Hawaii’s rental businesses and tourism industry.

Many visitors are unfamiliar with helmet laws and may choose alternative transportation, reducing rental revenue.

**Inconsistency in Vehicle Regulations**

SB30 enforces helmet use on mopeds but does not apply similar regulations to bicycles or electric scooters, which can reach comparable speeds.

Motorists accustomed to interacting with moped riders under current regulations may not experience improved safety but rather confusion over changing requirements.

**Personal Freedom and Choice**

Many adult moped riders prefer the choice to wear a helmet based on personal risk assessment.

Hawaii has historically respected individual responsibility in similar transportation laws, such as allowing adults to make their own decisions regarding helmet use on motorcycles.

**Lack of Clear Evidence on Safety Benefits**

While helmet use may reduce head injuries in certain accidents, studies on moped safety suggest that driver awareness, road conditions, and vehicle maintenance play larger roles in accident prevention.

Instead of focusing on mandatory helmet use, efforts should be made toward better road maintenance, driver education, and enforcement of existing traffic laws to improve overall moped safety.

## **Alternative Solutions**

Rather than enforcing a blanket helmet mandate, the legislature should consider:

- Encouraging voluntary helmet use through public awareness campaigns.
- Strengthening rider education programs for both residents and tourists.
- Improving road safety conditions by addressing potholes, road debris, and unsafe intersections where most accidents occur.

**SB-30**

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 11:04:36 AM

Testimony for TRN on 3/13/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Andrew	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We are on an island where it gets extremely hot and humid, at least let us have a way to cool off. I still keep my helmet wherever I go, but it's nice for the short trips from the beach or store.

**SB-30**

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 11:05:28 AM

Testimony for TRN on 3/13/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kevin Oberhofer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to express my opposition to Senate Bill 30, which mandates that individuals renting mopeds or motor scooters in Hawaii must wear safety helmets.

While the intent to enhance safety is commendable, this bill raises several concerns:

- 1. Economic Impact on Tourism:** Hawaii’s tourism industry is a vital component of our economy. Imposing mandatory helmet requirements specifically on rental moped and motor scooter users could deter visitors seeking the freedom and convenience these vehicles offer, potentially leading to a decline in rentals and associated revenues.
- 2. Inconsistency in Regulations:** The bill exempts individuals with motorcycle licenses from the helmet requirement, creating a disparity between residents and tourists. This inconsistency may cause confusion and could be perceived as discriminatory against visitors.
- 3. Enforcement Challenges:** Implementing and enforcing this mandate may strain local law enforcement resources. Distinguishing between riders who are required to wear helmets and those who are exempt could prove challenging and divert attention from more pressing public safety matters.
- 4. Personal Choice and Responsibility:** Adults should have the autonomy to make informed decisions about their safety gear. Providing education on helmet use and encouraging voluntary compliance may be more effective than imposing mandatory requirements.
- 5. Potential Negative Perception:** Targeting rental moped and motor scooter users with this mandate could create a negative perception among tourists, making Hawaii seem less welcoming and more restrictive compared to other destinations.

In conclusion, while safety is paramount, SB30 may have unintended consequences that could adversely affect our tourism industry and place unnecessary burdens on both visitors and law enforcement. I urge you to consider alternative approaches that promote safety without compromising personal freedom or economic vitality.

**SB-30**

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 11:11:21 AM

Testimony for TRN on 3/13/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Brandon Haught-Aliotti	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this because individuals who are over the age of 18 are grown adults who have the right to make their own decisions.

**SB-30**

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 11:38:45 AM

Testimony for TRN on 3/13/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sergio Rodriguez	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

i oppose this bill. Reasons for this are for locals and tourists who own or rent mopeds would be required to wear helmets. This can discourage riders to not ride at all. Someones safety should be there own choice not a requirement. It is always recommended to use, but why take the choice away.

**SB-30**

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 5:59:25 PM

Testimony for TRN on 3/13/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ryan Willis	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose

**SB-30**

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 6:02:50 PM

Testimony for TRN on 3/13/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kanoë Willis	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose