



The Judiciary, State of Hawaii

Testimony to the Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts

Senator Chris Lee, Chair
Senator Lorraine Inouye, Vice Chair

Tuesday, February 11 2025, 3:01 p. m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 224

By

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Bill No. and Title: Senate Bill No. 1658, Relating to Traffic.

Purpose: Transfers to the Department of Transportation 100% of the proceeds of the fines and forfeitures collected for uncontested traffic infractions committed within any county having a population of more than 150,000 but less than 175,000. Requires the proceeds to be deposited into a new county progress subaccount of the state highway fund, from which the Department shall allocate moneys for the Lahaina bypass north project, and subsequently for state-designated critical highway projects within the county in which the uncontested traffic infractions were committed.

Judiciary's Position:

The Judiciary takes no position as to the merits of this bill, but wishes to comment on certain operational and technical aspects.

Traffic infraction cases are entered into the Judiciary Information Management System (JIMS) and court location codes can be used to identify which collections should be deposited into a new county progress subaccount. New codes can be created and tested to accommodate this measure, but these technical changes in addition to changes in operational and fiscal procedures may require more time to effectuate. For this reason, the Judiciary respectfully requests an effective date of September 1, 2025 or later.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



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State Capitol, Conference Room 224 & Videoconference

S.B. 1658
RELATING TO TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS

Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts

The Hawaii Department of Transportation (HDOT) provides the following comments on SB1658, which proposes directing proceeds from uncontested traffic fines and forfeitures toward the Lahaina Bypass North Project through a newly established county progress subaccount within the state highway fund.

While we support the bill's overall intent, HDOT has concerns regarding certain aspects of the funding structure which proposes to utilize 100% of fines and forfeitures from uncontested traffic infractions within a designated county to fund the Lahaina Bypass North.

- While HDOT appreciates the effort to establish a dedicated funding stream, it is unclear whether this revenue source will generate sufficient and stable funding to fully support the project, given the variability of fine collections.

Concerns About the Diversion of Critical Revenue Streams

- Redirecting traffic fines and forfeitures exclusively to this project may impact existing programs and operations funded by these revenues.
- HDOT seeks clarification on how the new county progress subaccount will be managed to ensure that funds are efficiently allocated without affecting other transportation and public safety priorities.

Project Cost and Timeline Considerations

- The estimated cost of completing the Lahaina Bypass North from Keawe Street to Honokowai is \$280 million to \$300 million.
- Given the magnitude of the project, relying solely on uncontested traffic fines could result in funding shortfalls and extended project timelines.

- HDOT recommends exploring bond financing options tied to a stable revenue source to accelerate project completion and maintain financial stability.

Avoiding Unintended Consequences

- SB1658 specifies that, upon completion of the Lahaina Bypass North, funds in the county progress subaccount shall be redirected to other state-designated critical highway projects in the same county.
- HDOT seeks further clarification on the prioritization process for these future projects and whether they will align with the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

HDOT appreciates the Legislature's commitment to addressing West Maui's transportation needs. While SB1658 takes a step toward securing dedicated funding, we recommend further evaluation of the sustainability of relying on uncontested traffic fines and consideration of additional revenue mechanisms.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.