

d JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



EDWIN H. SNIFFEN
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

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DREANALEE K. KALILI
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STATE OF HAWAI'I | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION | KA 'OIHANA ALAKAU
869 PUNCHBOWL STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-5097

March 28, 2025
2:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Room 325

S.B. 30, H.D. 1
RELATING TO MOPEDS

House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

The Hawaii Department of Transportation (HDOT) **supports S.B. 30, H.D.1**, 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.

**DEPARTMENT OF THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO HO'OPI'I
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

ALII PLACE
1060 RICHARDS STREET • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
PHONE: (808) 768-7400 • FAX: (808) 768-7515 • WEBSITE: www.honoluluprosecutor.org

STEVEN S. ALM
PROSECUTING ATTORNEY
LOIO HO'OPI'I



THOMAS J. BRADY
FIRST DEPUTY PROSECUTING ATTORNEY
HOPE MUA LOIO HO'OPI'I

**THE HONORABLE DAVID A. TARNAS, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2025
State of Hawai'i**

March 28, 2025

RE: S.B. 30, H.D. 1; RELATING TO MOPED.

Chair Tarnas, Vice-Chair Poepoe, and members of the House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs, the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu ("Department") submits the following testimony in **support** of S.B. 30, H.D.1.

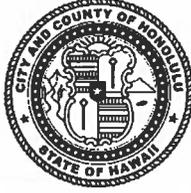
The purpose of this bill is to change the age of when a child can drive a moped on a highway, street, roadway or any other public property in the State from less than fifteen years of age to less than sixteen years of age. This bill will also require individuals under the age of twenty-one to wear a safety helmet while driving a moped. The Department supports this change as it will provide increased safety for our children and young adults. According to the National Institute on Mental Health, the pre-frontal cortex of a person's brain is one of the last parts to fully mature. This is a critical area of the brain and is responsible for "...skills like planning, prioritizing, and making good decisions."¹ It is not fully develop until a person is in their mid-to-late 20s. Therefore, requiring a person to wear a helmet while driving a moped as well as delaying the age in which one can drive a moped will protect the still developing and maturing brains of our children.

For all of the foregoing reasons, the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu **supports** the passage of S.B.30, H.D.1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

¹NIH Publication No. 23-MH-8078; <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/the-teen-brain-7-things-to-know>

HONOLULU POLICE DEPARTMENT
KA 'OIHANA MĀKA'I O HONOLULU
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

801 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
TELEPHONE: (808) 529-3111 • WEBSITE: www.honoluluupd.org



RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR
MEIA

ARTHUR J. LOGAN
CHIEF
KAHU MĀKA'I

KEITH K. HORIKAWA
RADE K. VANIC
DEPUTY CHIEFS
HOPE LUNA NUI MĀKA'I

OUR REFERENCE **ST-JK**

March 28, 2025

The Honorable David A. Tarnas, Chair
and Members
Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian
Affairs
House of Representatives
415 South Beretania Street, Room 325
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Tarnas and Members:

SUBJECT: Senate Bill No. 30, H.D. 1, Relating to Mopeds

I am Major Stason Tanaka of District 7 (East Honolulu), Honolulu Police Department (HPD), City and County of Honolulu.

The HPD supports Senate Bill No. 30, H.D. 1, Relating to Mopeds, as it contributes to the safety of all moped riders. Safety helmets worn by moped riders help to reduce the severity of injuries in the event of a crash. It has also been shown that they prevent serious brain injury and death.

The HPD urges you to support Senate Bill No. 30, H.D. 1, Relating to Mopeds.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,


Stason Tanaka, Major
District 7

APPROVED:


Arthur J. Logan
Chief of Police



COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Rep. David A. Tarnas, Chair

Rep. Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

DATE: Friday, March 28, 2025

TIME: 2:00 p.m.

**PLACE: VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE
Conference Room 325**

RE: Testimony in Support of SB30, HD1 Relating to Mopeds

From: Lisa Dau, RN, Injury Prevention Coordinator
Keiki Injury Prevention Coalition (KIPC)

On behalf of the Keiki Injury Prevention Coalition, **we support SB30, HD1**, requiring all moped drivers to wear helmets. Helmets significantly reduce the risk of head injuries and fatalities, making this a crucial safety measure.

Mopeds may be smaller than motorcycles, but they still pose risks in crashes. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), helmet use reduces head injury risk by 69% and death risk by 37%. Age should not determine safety—everyone benefits from helmet use.

Universal helmet laws also ease the financial burden on healthcare systems by preventing severe injuries. States with such laws report fewer head trauma cases and fatalities, proving their effectiveness.

We urge you to pass this life-saving legislation. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Lisa Dau, RN, MBA, BSN, CPSTI
KIPC, Injury Prevention Coordinator

The Keiki Injury Prevention Coalition's (KIPC) mission is to prevent and reduce injuries to children in Hawaii. <https://kipchawaii.org/>

SB-30-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 12:18:37 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/28/2025 2:00:00 PM

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-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 3:05:53 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/28/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

As a moped shop owner and driver strongly oppose this bill. Helmets like insurance have long been and should remain an option for moped riders. Helmets can cause negative tradeoffs such as lowered hearing and visuals depending on type. They can also give riders a false sense of security in safety. Helmets may help but are not a panacea and silver bullet solution .And to force all ages to wear without regard to riskier and less riskier groups age wise is also a bit overreaching.Please stop this bill or at least rework it with more nuance.

Thanks

Manabo Sato

Gen Mgr

Moped Doctors

SB-30-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 3:45:37 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/28/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael EKM Olderr	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It's still ridiculous that we make such a big deal about not buckling your seat belt and fine so many people for driving without seatbelts, but apparently nothing for people driving without helmets on the road. I cannot think of a sane argument against this bill. Please pass it.

SB-30-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 10:31:27 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/28/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robin Thorsen	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this. Dont make me wear helmet its my choice!

SB-30-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 10:33:27 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/28/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
lillianna shirley	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

i oppose this

SB-30-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 10:37:58 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/28/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Pitman	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill. Let people make choices for themselves.

SB-30-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 11:34:37 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/28/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kevin Oberhofer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to Senate Bill 30 (SB30 HD1), which proposes to amend Hawaii Revised Statutes to impose new age and safety helmet requirements for moped operators in the State of Hawaii. While I appreciate the intent to enhance safety on our roads, I believe this bill is overly restrictive, impractical, and fails to adequately address the broader needs of residents who rely on mopeds for affordable transportation. Below, I outline my concerns regarding the proposed changes.

First, raising the minimum age to operate a moped from 15 to 16 unnecessarily limits the mobility of young people who depend on mopeds as an affordable and accessible mode of transportation. For many teenagers, especially in rural areas or households with limited financial resources, mopeds provide a critical means to travel to school, part-time jobs, or community activities. Public transportation is not always a viable substitute due to limited routes and schedules. By increasing the minimum age, this bill could inadvertently burden families and hinder the independence of responsible young individuals without clear evidence that this change would significantly improve safety outcomes.

Second, the requirement that all moped operators under 21 wear a safety helmet—while exempting motorcycle license holders—creates an inconsistent and arbitrary standard. If the goal is truly safety, why does this requirement not apply uniformly to all moped users, regardless of age or licensing status? Studies on helmet efficacy often focus on high-speed motorcycle crashes, not the lower-speed scenarios typical of mopeds. Without specific data demonstrating a compelling safety benefit for this age-specific mandate, the provision feels more like a blanket restriction than a targeted solution. Furthermore, mandating helmets for rental company customers while allowing personal helmet use introduces additional inconsistency, potentially placing undue burden on visitors and rental businesses without addressing broader safety concerns.

Third, the effective date of July 1, 3000, appears to be a typographical error (likely intended as July 1, 2025), but it raises questions about the urgency and preparedness of this legislation. If this is indeed a mistake, it underscores a lack of attention to detail in the drafting process, which erodes confidence in the bill's overall merits. Assuming the intended date is in 2025, the rapid implementation of these changes could catch residents and businesses off guard, leaving little time to adjust to new requirements or procure compliant safety equipment.

Finally, this bill overlooks the economic impact on individuals and small businesses. Mopeds are a low-cost alternative to cars, and additional regulations—such as mandatory helmet provision by rental companies—could increase operating costs, driving up prices for consumers and potentially reducing tourism-related revenue. For residents, the added expense of purchasing helmets or facing penalties for non-compliance could disproportionately affect lower-income households, further straining their budgets.

I urge the Legislature to reconsider SB30 and explore alternatives that balance safety with practicality. For example, enhancing moped safety education programs or improving road infrastructure could address safety concerns without imposing restrictive mandates. If age and helmet requirements are deemed necessary, they should be supported by robust data specific to Hawaii's moped use patterns and applied consistently across all operators, not just select groups.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I respectfully request that you vote against SB30 HD1 in its current form and prioritize solutions that preserve access to affordable transportation while addressing safety in a fair and evidence-based manner.

SB-30-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 12:39:08 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/28/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chanara Casey Richmond	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB 30. Chanara Richmond, HD42