



**TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2025**

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

H.B. NO. 177, H.D. 1, RELATING TO CIVIL IDENTIFICATION CARDS.

BEFORE THE:

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

DATE: Friday, February 21, 2025

TIME: 12:00 p.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 308

TESTIFIER(S): Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or
Rachel Jordan, Deputy Attorney General

Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General (Department) provides the following comments on this bill.

The bill proposes to make civil identification cards in Hawaii free of charge for residents and temporary residents. Specifically, it aims to eliminate all fees associated with obtaining, renewing, or replacing identification cards and repeal the existing Civil Identification Card Fee Special Fund, with any remaining balance to be transferred to the general fund.

Currently, the examiner of drivers in each county processes and issues civil identification cards in accordance with chapter 286, Hawaii Revised Statutes. Article VIII, section 5, of the Hawaii State Constitution provides:

If any new program or increase in the level of service under an existing program shall be mandated to any of the political subdivisions by the legislature, it shall provide that the State share in the cost.

This bill may trigger such an increase by requiring counties to incur costs without a dedicated funding source. Because of the potential increase in the current level of service under an existing program, and insofar as the bill does not provide that the State share in any costs incurred by the counties, the mandated requirements in this bill may be subject to constitutional challenge.

Accordingly, the Department recommends including provisions in the bill ensuring that the State shares in the cost.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this bill.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



EDWIN H. SNIFFEN
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

Deputy Directors
Nā Hope Luna Ho'okele
DREANALEE K. KALILI
TAMMY L. LEE
CURT T. OTAGURO
ROBIN K. SHISHIDO

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

February 21, 2025
12:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Room 308

**H.B. 177, H.D. 1
RELATING TO CIVIL IDENTIFICATION CARDS**

House Committee on Finance

The Hawaii Department of Transportation (HDOT) **opposes H.B. 177, H.D. 1**, which makes the issuance or renewal of a civil identification card free of charge.

The HDOT opposes this bill which will have a detrimental impact to being able to continue to offer such services to the public without funding to maintain the program.

The cost for a Hawaii civil identification card (SID) is \$40 for an eight-year period. The current cost to operate SID program is approximately \$1,223,523, with revenue of \$1,398,441 in fiscal year 2024. The grant total for the SID program for fiscal year 2024 was \$174,918. As the personnel and credential printing costs continue to rise, the SID program is already facing a financial challenge.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

DEPARTMENT OF CUSTOMER SERVICES
KA 'OIHANA LAWELAWE KUPA
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

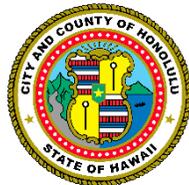
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KIMBERLY HASHIRO
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MEGAN JOHNSON
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
HOPE PO'O



February 20, 2025

The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
The Honorable Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
and Members of the House Committee on Finance
State Capitol, Conference Room 308
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

SUBJECT: H.B. No. 177, H.D. 1 - Relating To Civil Identification Cards
HEARING: Friday, February 21, 2025, 12:00 p.m.

The City and County of Honolulu, Department of Customer Services (CSD) opposes this bill and appreciates the opportunity to offer comments to H.B. No. 177, H.D. 1 relating to civil identification cards for your committee's consideration.

Pursuant to Section 6-402 of the Revised Charter of the City and County of Honolulu, CSD administers, among other things, the motor vehicle driver licensing and state identification program for the island of O'ahu.

H.B. No. 177, H.D. 1 makes the issuance or renewal of a civil identification card free of charge, effective June 30, 3000. The cost for a Hawaii civil identification card (SID) is \$40 for an eight-year period. The current cost to operate the SID program is approximately \$1,223,523, with revenue of \$1,398,441 in fiscal year 2024. The grant total for the SID program for fiscal year 2024 was \$174,918. As the personnel and credential printing costs continue to rise, the SID program is already facing a financial challenge.

CSD opposes this bill which will have a detrimental impact on the ability of the State and the counties to continue to offer such services to the public. The loss of fees charged in connection with the issuance or renewal of any civil identification card under

Testimony for H.B. No. 177, H.D. 1
February 20, 2025
Page 2

Chapter 286, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, would negatively impact the State and the counties. Currently, nine (9) CSD Division of Motor Vehicle Registration positions are reimbursed by the State through revenues generated from fees charged in connection with the issuance or renewal of civil identification cards.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on H.B. No. 177, H.D. 1.

Sincerely,

Kimberly M. Hashiro
Director Designate



**WAIANAE COAST
COMPREHENSIVE
HEALTH CENTER**

Friday, February 21, 2025 at 12:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

To: Chair Kyle Yamashita
Vice Chair Jenna Takenouchi

From: Ian Ross
Public Affairs Director
ianross@wcchc.com | (808)652-3380

RE: **TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 177 HD 1 - RELATING TO CIVIL IDENTIFICATION CARDS**

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Ian Ross, and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of the Waiānae Coast Comprehensive Health Center (WCCHC), a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) serving the Waiānae Coast and surrounding areas. We provide comprehensive medical, dental, behavioral health, and social services to over 35,000 patients annually, including some of the most underserved and vulnerable populations in the state.

WCCHC strongly **supports HB177 HD1**, which would allow residents to obtain a civil identification card free of charge. This bill would significantly benefit individuals experiencing homelessness, who often face overwhelming barriers when trying to access essential services, including housing, healthcare, and employment.

Through our outreach to those experiencing homelessness, WCCHC works directly with individuals who struggle to obtain or replace lost identification documents. Identification is a requirement for entering shelters, applying for housing assistance, securing employment, and accessing public benefits such as healthcare and food assistance. The financial burden of obtaining an ID, though seemingly small, is often a large barrier for those without stable income.

By eliminating this cost, HB177 HD1 would remove a critical obstacle for our unhoused patients, allowing them to take the first step toward stability. For many, something as simple as obtaining an ID is the key to unlocking a pathway out of homelessness.

We urge the Committee to pass HB177 HD1 and remove unnecessary barriers to services for our most vulnerable community members.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
THE THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2025**

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Kyle Yamashita, Chair

Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

Friday, February 21, 2024, 12:00 PM

Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

Re: Testimony on HB177 – RELATING TO CIVIL IDENTIFICATION CARDS

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

I'm submitting testimony in **support** of HB177. Sometimes the barrier for the poor to access the necessary services is the inability to get an Identification card (ID). Hawaii State ID's cost \$40. That's a lot of money for some who have to choose between groceries and bills.

Every state agency requires IDs to receive any sort of services/resources. Outside of that, IDs are needed in almost every aspect of life. From trying to find a job, going to the bank, picking up your child early from school, providing payment at the cash register, finding a new healthcare provider, traveling off-island, voting at a voter service center, even entering State Capitol Grounds to testify.

The function of government is to help and work for the people. Removing this barrier is a great way to show that.

Mahalo for letting me testify on this matter.

Tuli Tafai

Private Citizen

HB-177-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 10:49:46 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
TERI SAVAIINAEA	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Takenouchi and Committee Members,

I strongly **support** HB177 HD1. This bill is a vital step in helping formerly incarcerated individuals, the elderly, and the houseless regain stability and become productive members of society by providing free state identification cards. An ID is essential for accessing employment, housing, healthcare, and support services, yet many in these groups lack the means to obtain one, keeping them trapped in cycles of hardship.

For formerly incarcerated individuals, an ID is the first step toward reintegration—helping them secure jobs, housing, and essential resources, ultimately reducing recidivism. For our elderly and houseless populations, it is a lifeline to medical care, financial assistance, and shelter programs, ensuring they receive the help they need.

Without identification, these individuals face unnecessary barriers that prevent them from moving forward. By passing HB177 HD1, we can break these cycles, promote self-sufficiency, and create a more inclusive and supportive Hawai‘i. I am in **strong support** of this bill to empower our most vulnerable community members.

Kind regards,

Teri Kia Savaiinaea

District 45, Wai'anae resident

HB-177-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 12:27:00 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kalae	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We need more accessability for our kupuna and people with disabilities they are the ones who get state ID.

mahalo

Aloha, my name is Taei Matautia. As a private citizen, I am in support of the proposed amendment of bill HB177 to making the issuance or renewal of a civil identification card free of charge as it is considered a practical necessity for everyday life. More times than not, the need to present identification is required – to gain employment, to open a bank account, to obtain supporting documentation from state or federal offices, to conduct basic living business such as seeking housing or applying for public assistance, to establish healthcare, to register for education and many more base line resources to even begin acquiring necessities that promote stability. A government system that requires identification to attain services or apply for opportunities should strongly consider offering that identification type to be free of charge. It allows everyone the same opportunity to access all that was mentioned above without the barrier of affordability. The high cost of living in Hawaii can be a deterrent to economic growth and workforce affordability. With that being said, the current fee of \$40 for a new or renewal of the state identification card is equivalent to the following cost of basic living necessity that it could be applied to instead, such as:

- A meal for the day or two for an individual
- A month's worth of infant formula
- To pay for attaining supporting documents required for the state identification
- To pay for public transportation to get around for about 7-10 days on Oahu
- To use toward an initial deposit to open a bank account
- To use toward copay for a doctor visit
- To use toward copay for a prescription
- Covers the cost of an average rental application fee in Hawaii

There is so much more that could be listed and I'm confident in your discernment to think of a few more scenarios yourself. In my line of work, which is within community service, on a daily basis there is always a scenario that presents itself which includes a client not having a valid civil or government issued identification. Whether it be, the client lost it to it being stolen. Most times, it is clients that are nearing homelessness again, just getting out of homelessness, affected by some kind of domestic abuse, affected by unemployment, elderly who live alone or young adults navigating adulthood. These specific type of clients mentioned are almost always in the earnings of 30%-40% area median income housing limit or even less. With all the eligibility requirements and basic identification needs for assistance or resources, let's not allow attaining a valid civil identification at a cost be the barrier that allows a citizen to have access to basic living resources in our community or in any community for that matter. My hope is that you consider this testimony to aid in this important piece of legislation that will allow access to a document that could assist tremendously in the lives of everyone in our community, but most desperately to our underserved populations. Everyone deserves a chance to be able to re-enter into society and an affirming start would be to obtain valid civil identification – free of charge.

HB-177-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 7:17:54 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2025 12:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

February 19,2025

Dear Rep. Kyle Yamashita,

My name is Wendy Kim and I reside in Honolulu, Hawaii.

I am emailing to express my support for HB177; Issuing State IDs free of charge.

At my previous employment as a case manager for homeless individuals and currently a housing assistance specialist for the homeless population, I believe that issuing free State IDs would especially benefit the homeless and low income individuals. The resources of the homeless/ low income are barely enough to cover their daily necessities. Offering a free ID would help the homeless and low income population in many aspects because a valid government ID is a required document when applying for housing, jobs, education, and government services and benefits.

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony.

Sincerely,

Wendy Kim

HB-177-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 8:29:33 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deborah S.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I believe this bill will alleviate financial stress whether homeless or others meet qualifications. In my line of work, I see clients who have no identification and yet, we need this to verify and/or release vital information. Having proper identification will not only help these individuals but also assist businesses/entities process a requested transaction.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

HB-177-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 8:43:15 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kerry Kaneshiro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Hawaii State Legislature --

I am writing to voice my support for the measure. A government-issued ID is needed to apply for government benefits and services, and also for financial services. Over the years, I've seen many families denied benefits because they were unable to provide primary documentation, including ID. Many families are struggling today due to the high cost of housing and groceries, and HB177 if passed would provide local families with much needed relief.

Mahalo

Kerry Kaneshiro

Testimony Regarding HB177

Aloha! My name is Ravan Dayton and I stand here today to share my appreciation and support for the recent initiative to issue civil identification cards free of charge to citizens. This policy is a significant step toward ensuring equal access to fundamental services for all individuals, regardless of their financial background.

Having observed firsthand the challenges many face in obtaining a civil ID due to the associated costs, I firmly believe that eliminating the financial burden opens doors to better opportunities for everyone. A civil ID is not only essential for everyday activities such as opening a bank account, voting, or applying for government services, but it also serves as a key tool for personal identification, which is crucial in modern society.

By making the issuance of these cards free, the government is reinforcing the values of inclusion, equality, and fairness. It demonstrates a genuine commitment to protecting the rights of all citizens and ensuring that no one is excluded due to economic hardship.

For myself and many others, the ability to obtain a civil ID without having to worry about additional financial pressures has been a source of relief. This initiative helps strengthen the social fabric by promoting a sense of belonging and security among citizens.

I strongly support this initiative and encourage its continued implementation, as it not only provides tangible benefits but also embodies the spirit of progress and social responsibility.

Aloha,

Ravan Dayton

HB-177-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 9:30:38 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2025 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacob Wiencek	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

Government issued identification cards are crucial to the functioning in modern society. Making them free will help people who need identification. I urge the Committee to pass this bill!