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

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

**S.B. 1216, S.D. 1, H.D. 1
RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION**

House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

The Hawaii Department of Transportation (HDOT) **supports the intent of S.B. 1216, S.D. 1, H.D. 1**, which conditions the issuance of a certificate of inspection for a moped or motor vehicle that has been equipped with a noisy muffler or exhaust system and addresses the penalties of an official inspection station for the violation of any rule regarding inspecting a noisy muffler or exhaust system.

The HDOT supports the intent of this bill as this would promote adherence of proper vehicle and moped general safety standard as the HDOT has received numerous calls and e-mails from residents, impacted by the noisy aftermarket mufflers. We support any attempts to reduce the exhaust noise problem.

Hawaii Administrative Rules Chapter 19-133.5 provides for suspension and revocation of certifications for individual inspectors and official inspection stations for failure to inspect vehicles as required by Section 19-133.2-36 (Inspection of exhaust system). This includes a procedure for notice of infraction, hearing, and penalties. However, HDOT notes that vehicle owners can switch out system components after inspections.

To address noise pollution, the HDOT is launching the noise detection camera pilot later this year and will share the data with partners to better plan their enforcement and education efforts.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

SB-1216-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 11:29:19 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eileen Hilton	Windward Coalition	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

March 26, 2025

Aloha Chairman Tarnas and Committee members,

SB1216 SD1 is a bill in the Hawaii State Legislature that aims to condition the issuance of a vehicle inspection certificate upon the vehicle not being equipped with a noisy muffler or exhaust system. We agree with amendments that ensure stricter enforcement, increases maximum fines, and specifies and clarifies prohibited practices.

The Windward Coalition strongly supports this bill as it would lead to:

- **Noise reduction:** The bill would help reduce noise pollution with its well documented adverse medical effects .
- **Improved quality of life:** Quieter streets and neighborhoods leads to a better quality of life for Hawaii residents, particularly in urban areas.
- **Environmental benefits:** Standard exhaust systems may lead to reduced emissions and improved air quality.

Mahalo,

Eileen Hilton, MD

President, Windward Coalition

SB-1216-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 3:40:27 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jillian Anderson	Waikiki Neighborhood Board	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Waikiki Neighborhood Board stands in **support** of SB1216 SD1 HD1.

One of the most frequent complaints of Waikiki residents is noise, and in particular, noisy mufflers. In fact, one is audible as this very line of testimony is being written.

On a monthly basis members of the Waikiki Neighborhood Board press HPD on noisy muffler enforcement, which on average is being cited at a rate of 1 - 3 violators in an entire month. The difficulty of our officers being exposed to on-view violations makes rates of enforcement for current laws extremely low. It is for this reason that alternative points of enforcement, like that created by SB1216 SD1 HD1, are crucial.

Checking if vehicles are equipped with noisy mufflers or exhaust systems during safety checks is a simple addition and one that could further deter these immensely disruptive equipment modifications.

The Waikiki Neighborhood Board asks for your continued support of this measure which would greatly benefit our community.

SB-1216-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 10:41:56 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Don Baluran	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this bill.

Loud, excessive vehicular noise is out of control in my community and negatively affects our health and quality of life.

SB-1216-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 3:39:44 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Victor Brock	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this Bill and thank the legislature for finally dealing with this type of unnecessary noise pollution.

SB-1216-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 4:06:13 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
B.A. McClintock	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this important bill. Mahalo.

SB-1216-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 11:14:31 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keoni Velasquez	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice chair Poepoe, and members of the committee on judiciary & hawaiian affairs.

I agree on the fact that excessively noisy mufflers need to be controlled but this bill does not address this issue. The problems that I see with this bill is the enforcement and regulaton of the noise and the stock vs aftermarket muffler noise level.

How will the safety check stations deem a "Noisy" muffler? The flaw that I see with this part is that some stock or OEM exhausts from factory will be louder than other model and make stock exhausts. The noise level does not depend on the exhaust at this point. For example, a stock muffler or exhaust Chevrolet Camaro ZL1 will be noisier or have a higher decibel level than a stock muffler or exhaust Chevrolet Colorado. Also, some aftermarket exhaust systems will still be quieter than the previously mentioned Chevrolet Camaro ZL1.

The excessive muffler noise is rooted at operator behavior. Due to the reasons above, there needs to be regulation with the operator and not the actual installed muffler or exhaust.

This burden should not be put on safety check stations and this will only hurt the many residents of Hawaii. It will add long wait times to safety checks with an increasing population in Oahu with an even more car population.

Lastly, this will only further hurt the car enthusiast community of Hawaii. We have no problem in regulation of noise when operating the vehicle but it gets to be a problem when safety check inspection is denied due to an aftermarket exhaust that is quieter than a stock exhaust or muffler of a Porsche GT4, Camaro ZL1, Lexus LC500, Audi RS3, etc. A person with an aftermarket exhaust can drive safe with minimizing noise while a stock Porsche GT4 or Camaro ZL1 will drive in a manner that results with excessive noise. See the problem there? Regulation while driving or operating vehicle is key.

Thank you for your time in listening to my testimony,

Keoni

SB-1216-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 11:43:36 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrew Ramirez	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Members of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to SB1216.

While I agree that noisy mufflers are a problem that should be addressed, this bill does not directly address the core issue and places an unnecessary burden on safety inspection stations. SB1216 would require these stations to interpret sections 291-24 and 291-24.5 and decide whether a vehicle's muffler system "noticeably increases the noise" compared to the factory-installed system.

The issue with this is that the bill does not define what "noticeably" means. This lack of clarity could lead to inconsistent enforcement between stations or inspectors. Moreover, it would require a full inspection of the exhaust system, which could slow down the safety check process, reduce capacity at inspection stations, and potentially require vehicles to be put on lifts for further inspection.

Additionally, many of the testimonies provided so far have focused on issues in densely populated areas. While noise pollution in such areas is certainly a concern, it's important to recognize that the solution doesn't lie solely with automotive inspection centers. Instead, more effective enforcement could be achieved through increased policing in these high-density areas, focusing on the behavior of drivers, especially in places where noise is most disruptive. This approach would avoid overburdening local inspection stations and would allow resources to be better allocated to where they are needed most.

From a noise perspective, it's worth noting that an aftermarket exhaust may not necessarily be louder than a stock exhaust. For example, in a prior testimony before the Senate's TCA committee on SB586 (2/9/2023), Christian Robinson from the Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA) explained: "A Honda sedan with a stock muffler might produce 70 dB of noise, while a Porsche 911 might produce 95 dB. A Honda owner could install an aftermarket muffler, raising the noise to 80 dB, making the vehicle illegal while still being quieter than other legal vehicles on the road."

Rather than focusing on the hardware, the focus should be on vehicle operation. Drivers should be held accountable for driving responsibly and respectfully. Legislation should target excessive

revving during unreasonable times or in certain areas, rather than requiring safety inspection stations to determine whether an aftermarket exhaust is louder than a stock one.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

SB-1216-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 11:54:25 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Clarence Regalado	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition of SB1216.

Despite its good intentions, SB1216 puts an unfair onus on safety inspection stations to interpret HRS 291-24/291-24.5 - specifically, whether a vehicle's muffler system does not "noticeably increase the noise emitted by a motor vehicle above that emitted by the vehicle as equipped from factory." An incorrect interpretation of this statute may result in penalties for the safety inspection station.

Without clear guidance and the definition of the word "noticeably," SB1216 may unintentionally cause inconsistencies between safety inspection stations and inspectors. Additionally, a safety inspector's definition of "noticeably increase" may not agree with a police officer's interpretation of the same phrase.

Furthermore, there may be an impact on safety inspection capacity, as SB1216 may require additional inspection by lifting a vehicle to inspect its exhaust system. This is more than the standard walk around and safety testing. This would require that a vehicle lift be available during the inspection, the absence of which may delay the inspection.

I strongly encourage the committee and legislature to explore alternative means to discourage the behavior of driving vehicles in a way that causes a public nuisance, rather than focus on creating a new methodology to block certain aftermarket parts, enforced by safety inspection stations through an interpretation of vaguely written laws.

SB-1216-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 12:38:29 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 SB1216. Chanara Richmond, hd 42