



The Judiciary, State of Hawai'i

Testimony to the Thirty-Third State Legislature, 2025 Session

House Committee on Finance
Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

Tuesday, April 1, 2025, 2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 308 &
Via Videoconference

By:

Michelle D. Acosta
Deputy Chief Court Administrator
District Court of the First Circuit

Bill No. and Title: Senate Bill No. 1667, SD2, HD2, Relating to Transportation.

Purpose: Requires, when planning and managing state highways, in certain areas to be determined by certain national standards. Establishes requirements for the State Highway Safety and Modernization Council. Authorizes the State Highway Safety and Modernization Council to select potential areas for the Department of Transportation to install additional photo red light imaging detector systems. Prohibits any vehicles from blocking marked crosswalks. Authorizes the Department of Transportation to implement additional automated speed enforcement systems in school zones as designated by the Safe Routes to School Advisory Committee. Requires annual reports. Requires the Department of Transportation to collaborate with the courts before any expansion of the photo red light imaging detector and automated speed enforcement systems. Appropriates funds. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD2)

Judiciary's Position:

The Judiciary takes no position on the merits of the bill and submits the following concerns for the Legislatures consideration.

This measure provides for the expansion of the photo red light imaging detectors into areas identified by the State Highway Safety and Modernization Council and automated speed enforcement systems in school zones, designated by the Safe Routes to School Advisory Committee. The Judiciary has concerns regarding the volume of citations that may be generated from the expansion of these systems.

Based on available data, the 10 intersections with existing red-light photo detection systems in Honolulu issued an average 1,991 citations per month in 2024. In a recent KHON2 News story from January 2025 it was reported that during a one-week period the automated speed camera system recorded 22,000 vehicles exceeding the posted speed limit by at least 11 miles per hour. The Judiciary is concerned about the effects the potential volume of citations will have on the district courts.

These citations must be processed by the district courts. The high volume would likely overwhelm current court resources. The third-party vendor selected by the Department of Transportation would provide electronic copies of traffic citations to the district courts throughout the state. However, the Judiciary's Information Management System (JIMS) is not currently equipped to pull data from the law enforcement citations and transfer the data into court records. Instead, all of the information in the citations (name, address, driver's license number, location of the offense, vehicle make and model, vehicle license plate, etc.) is manually entered by court staff into JIMS, similar to the way that handwritten notes on a receipt need to be manually entered into a billing system in order to create an invoice. Once that information is manually entered by court staff, court staff then processes requests for hearings, written statements from motorists contesting the citations or explaining mitigating circumstances, schedules court dates, and prepares minutes from court hearings. A dramatic increase in traffic citations would likely overwhelm current court resources, potentially to the detriment of other types of cases heard by district court and could also result in the backlog of processing these citations.

The Judiciary's Information Technology Systems Department (ITSD) is looking for technological solutions to efficiently receive and process the high volume of electronic citations. This process of developing and procuring the most appropriate solution will require time and possibly an appropriation. In addition, the Judiciary may require an increase in court personnel to manage steps in the process that cannot be resolved with technology. For example, reviewing written statements and conducting court hearings.

The Judiciary appreciates the recognition of the amendments requiring that any expansion shall account for the impacts on the district courts and providing the courts with up to twelve months collaboration time with the department of transportation. The Judiciary would anticipate an appropriation of approximately \$750,000.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



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

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

S.B. NO. 1667, S.D. 2, H.D. 2, RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION.

BEFORE THE:

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

DATE: Tuesday, April 1, 2025

TIME: 2:00 p.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 308

TESTIFIER(S): Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or
Tricia M. Nakamatsu, Deputy Attorney General

Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee:

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

The purpose of this bill is to improve road safety by, among other things:
(1) establishing a new offense of "vehicles blocking crosswalks," and (2) requiring any expansion of the red light imaging detector systems and automated speed enforcement systems programs to account for its impact on the district courts statewide and provide up to twelve months for the courts to collaborate with the department of transportation before implementing any expansion of the programs. The Department takes no position on these proposed changes, but recommends revisions to the wording of sections 3, 4, and 5, to more effectively implement those changes.

VEHICLES BLOCKING CROSSWALKS

Section 3 of the bill adds two new sections to chapter 291C, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS). The first of those sections, at page 5, line 19, to page 6, line 3, provides:

§291C- Vehicles blocking crosswalks. Vehicles stopped on and blocking any marked crosswalk at any time shall be subject to a fine no greater than \$500, excepting situations of emergency or unless ordered by law enforcement. The placement of signs or curb markings at the crosswalk shall not be necessary for the purposes of enforcing this section.

The word **"stopped"** (page 5, line 19) could mean parked (engine turned off) or idling the engine (as at a red light). We recommend replacing the word "stopped" with the word "parked" or providing specific parameters for the prohibited act.

The word **"blocking"** (page 5, line 20), which is commonly understood to mean "obstructed," would also benefit from parameters, similar to those in the offense of "Obstructing," under section 711-1105(1)(b), HRS ("A person commits the offense of obstructing if, whether alone or with others and having no legal privilege to do so, the person knowingly or recklessly . . . [p]rovides less than thirty-six inches of space for passage on any paved public sidewalk."). Another option would be to delete "and blocking" from page 5, line 20, so the offense would apply whenever any portion of the vehicle is stopped (or parked) on a crosswalk.

The exceptions for an **"emergency"** (page 6, line 1), should be made clear, because "emergency" is a subjective term. We suggest providing examples of situations that would qualify as an emergency, i.e., an emergency vehicle approaching or a medical event that prevents safe operation of the vehicle. Notably, "choice of evils" and other types of "justifications" are already recognized as a legal defense, under chapter 703, HRS, General principles of justification, so those "emergency" situations are already covered.

The Committee may also wish to consider alternate wording and/or exceptions based on comparable county ordinances¹, which provide:

No person shall stop, stand, or park a vehicle, except when necessary to avoid conflict with other traffic or in compliance with the law or the direction of a police officer or traffic control device . . . on a crosswalk

¹ **Maui County Code:** Available online at https://library.municode.com/hi/county_of_maui/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT10VETR_ARTIMATRCO_CH10.48STSTPA#:~:text=030%20%2D%20Prohibited%20in%20certain%20places.&text=Share%20Link-,A.,1.; last accessed March 30, 2025.

Revised Ordinances of Honolulu: Available online at <https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/honolulu/latest/honolulu/0-0-0-11346>; last accessed March 30, 2025.

Hawaii County Code: "No person shall stop, stand, or park a vehicle . . . in a crosswalk" (section 15-26(d), Hawaii County Code). Available online at <https://records.hawaiicounty.gov/WebLink/DocView.aspx?dbid=1&id=110717&page=13&cr=1>; last accessed March 30, 2025.

EXPANSION OF AUTOMATED ENFORCEMENT SYSTEMS

Sections 4 and 5 of the bill (page 7, line 6, to page 8, line 3) add new sections to the HRS that require additional collaboration with the district courts, prior to "expansion" of the red light imaging detector systems program or automated speed enforcement systems program. Instead of adding those new sections to the HRS, for better placement of the provisions in related statutes, we recommend amending section 291J-4(c), HRS (regarding photo red light imaging detector systems) and section 291L-3(c), HRS (regarding automated speed enforcement systems) by using a portion of the proposed wording from sections 4 and 5 to create new paragraphs under those existing statutes, as follows (underscoring removed from new material in bill, to Ramseyer additional changes):

For section 291J-4(c), the amended wording from section 4 would read:

(c) Prior to the installation and operation of any photo red light imaging detector system, for each intersection considered for enforcement via the photo red light imaging detector system, the State or county shall:

(1) . . .; ~~and~~

(2) . . .; and

(3) ~~[. . . shall account for its]~~ Discuss the system's anticipated impact [on] with the district courts [statewide] and provide up to twelve months [from the time of identification for the courts] to collaborate with the [department] district courts before [implementing any expansion of the programs.] the system becomes operational.

For section 291L-3(c), the amended wording from section 5 would read:

(c) Before the installation and operation of any automated speed enforcement system, for each location considered for enforcement via the automated speed enforcement system, the State shall conduct:

(1) . . .; ~~and~~

(2) . . .; and

(3) ~~[. . . shall account for its]~~ Discussions about the system's anticipated impact [on] with the district courts [statewide] and provide up to twelve months [from the time of identification for the courts] to collaborate with the [department of transportation] district courts before [implementing any expansion of the programs.] the system becomes operational.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



Testimony for Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
Support for SB1667 - Relating to Transportation
House Committee on Finance (FIN)
April 1, 2025 at 2PM

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi,, and members of the FIN committee,
Mahalo for the opportunity to express **SUPPORT for SB1667**, which establishes a number of provisions to improve pedestrian safety, including prohibiting vehicles from marked crosswalks, authorization of automated speed enforcement, pedestrian lead intervals, and others.

With the State's growing cost of living, including transportation costs, as well as our climate and energy crises, it is vital that we prioritize funding to improve the safety, accessibility, and affordability of non-vehicular modes of transportation. Unfortunately, pedestrian injuries and fatalities are on the rise.

We believe one of the most powerful components of SB1667 is the provision for leading pedestrian intervals (LPIs). LPIs are an under-utilized Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) proven safety countermeasure. LPIs increase pedestrian visibility and improve the likelihood of drivers yielding to pedestrians. FHWA estimates that LPIs can achieve a 13% reduction in pedestrian-related crashes at intersections.¹ However, in cities where LPI strategies have been implemented, even greater safety benefits have been measured. For example, in 2019, Seattle adopted a new policy to evaluate adding a LPI whenever a new traffic signal was built or repaired. At locations where LPI's had been installed in Seattle saw a 48% reduction in pedestrian turning collisions and a 34% reduction in serious injury and fatal pedestrian collisions.²

The 2023 Vulnerable Road User Safety Assessment for Hawai'i noted that 57% of pedestrian crashes happen at intersections, demonstrating the large possibility of such a safety intervention. Unlike the many pedestrian infrastructure across our state, this one solution is completely operational and thus available at a much lower cost.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.

Abbey Seitz

Abbey Seitz, Director of Transportation Equity
Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice

¹ U.S Dept. of Transportation, Federal Highways Administration. (2024). *Leading Pedestrian Interval*. Webpage. [Available here.](#)

² Seattle Department of Transportation. (2024). *Leading Pedestrian Intervals*. Webpage. [Available here.](#)



Testimony of the Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization

Senate Committee on Finance

04/01/2025 2:00 PM
CR 308 & Videoconference

SB 1667 SD2 HD2 RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi and Committee Members,

The Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization (OahuMPO) **supports SB1667 SD2 HD2** which makes changes to and appropriates funds for various transportation safety efforts and penalties regarding poor driving behaviors including impaired driving and speeding and appropriates funds.

This bill will help us achieve our goal of reducing traffic related deaths and serious injuries to zero by 2045. Traffic fatalities increased ten percent between 2023 and 2024 in Hawaii and speeding and impaired driving are some of the biggest causes of traffic fatalities and serious injuries. In 2024, the State of Hawaii Department of Transportation conducted an annual [behavioral study](#), and nearly one-quarter of respondents admitted to exceeding the speed limit by more than 20 miles per hour, and over half exceeded the speed limit by 10-20 miles per hour in the last six months. Statistics provided by the [Honolulu Police Department](#) and [State of Hawaii Department of Health](#) indicate that nearly half of traffic fatalities on Oahu and within the State of Hawaii are caused by impaired driving.

The OahuMPO is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) on the island of Oahu responsible for carrying out a multimodal transportation planning process, including the development of a long-range (25-year horizon) metropolitan transportation plan, referred to as the Oahu Regional Transportation Plan (ORTP), which encourages and promotes a safe, efficient, and resilient transportation system that serves the mobility needs of all people and freight (including walkways, bicycles, and transit), fosters economic growth and development, while minimizing fuel consumption and air pollution ([23 CFR 450.300](#)).

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

**ADDRESS**

3442 Wai'ālae Ave., Suite 1
Honolulu, HI 96816

PHONE

808-735-5756

EMAIL

bicycle@hbl.org

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Tuesday, April 1, 2025 – 2:00pm

Hawai'i Bicycling League Supports SB 1667 SD 2, HD 2, Relating to Transportation

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

My name is Eduardo Hernandez, and I am the Advocacy Director of the Hawai'i Bicycling League (HBL). We are a non-profit organization founded in 1975 with the mission of enabling more people to ride bicycles for health, recreation, and transportation. We strive to create communities across our islands that have safe, accessible, and inclusive environments for people to bike, walk, and roll.

Hawai'i Bicycling League supports SB 1667, SD2, HD 2, which updates state traffic code by prohibiting vehicles from stopping and blocking crosswalks, as well as reckless driving or riding animals; further clarifies breath, blood, and urine testing criteria for persons that have been arrested; establishes an automated speed enforcement systems program with criteria for the state Highway Safety and Modernization Council (HSMC) and the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) advisory committee to recommend additional intersections that would use this technology; adopts National Association of City Transportation Officials' (NACTO) standards as well as American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials' (AASHTO) standards as regards design for state highways bisecting and bordering residential areas.

This is common-sense legislation that prioritizes safety, especially for vulnerable road users. Moreover, it aligns and leverages Complete Streets statutes that have been adopted by the state and each of the counties. By establishing a significant fine schedule for infractions, this bill strengthens compliance. Finally, by adopting NACTO and AASHTO standards, this bill establishes proven metrics to slow vehicles, especially in residential areas, helping people to choose walking, biking and rolling as a transportation option.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony. We encourage your support for **SB 1667, SD 2, HD2**.

Ride Aloha,

S/ Eduardo Hernandez

Eduardo Hernandez
Advocacy Director