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

February 19, 2025  
9:45 A.M.  
State Capitol, Room 016 & Videoconference

**S.B. 30**  
**RELATING TO HIGHWAY SAFETY**

Senate Committee on Judiciary

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The Department of Transportation (DOT) **supports S.B. 30**, which requires all moped drivers to wear a safety helmet when driving a moped, regardless of age.

According to DOT 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.

**SB-30**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 9:44:19 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Manabo Sato	Testifying for Moped Doctors Inc	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Honored Chair, Vice Chair and Committee members,

My name is Manabu "Robert" Sato and I am the Vice President and Co founder of Moped Doctors, a local moped retailer and service center for over fifteen years. We at Moped Doctors STRONGLY OPPOSE SB30 .

Helmets possibly may mitigate traffic accident injuries involving mopeds (or motorcycles or any other two or three wheeled open vehicle ). However, a BLANKET LAW that targets ALL MOPED RIDERS> Regardless of age is unnecessary and bordering on overreach. The number of current moped traffic fatalities in Hawaii stand at the lowest per year statistically with unfortunately but usually 1 to 2 fatalities a year with NO UNIVERSAL HELMET law. Just by having the individual rider choose to AS AN OPTION , wear a helmet with current standards, MOPEDS HAVE THE LOWEST TRAFFIC FATALITY RATE of ANY motor vehicle class including pedestrians, motorcycles, scooters, cars etc.

There are already current moped /motorcycle mandatory helmet laws for minors and younger more higher risk classes of two wheeled vehicile riders.

There are also some other bills that are aiming at raising the age for wearing helmets on mopeds, and there is even a universal helmets mandatory for all two wheeled vehicles including mopeds, motorcycles, scooters and possibly electric bicycles etc RIGHT NOW . That alone renders the whole point of even bringing this bill to life moot when a even more universal two wheeled helmet law is in the works.

This bill will also be IMPOSSIBLE To enforce consistently.

Please DO NOT PASS THIS BILL as it takes away the choice of Hawaii Moped riders/drivers who are already squeezed (and if fines are implemented for no helmet will be even more squeezed finanacially).

This law is also unnecessary because of the other more complete bills in the works anyway. Defer this bill please.

Mahalo,

Manabu "Robert" Sato

VP/GM Moped Doctors Inc.

**LATE**

**SB-30**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 7:41:21 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joe Shimkonis	Testifying for Mopeds Direct Inc	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello,

I oppose this law as it should be the freedom of the rider to decide if they would like to wear a helmet.

Regards,

Joe Shimkonis

**SB-30**

Submitted on: 2/14/2025 8:03:32 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

It's 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**

Submitted on: 2/14/2025 10:24:27 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ruth Love	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As an Emergency Nurse of 35 years, I strongly support requiring helmet use by all drivers or passengers on mopeds. It will decrease the risk of head injury by >80%.

Thank you

Mrs Ruth Love

**SB-30**

Submitted on: 2/15/2025 8:40:22 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Frank Schultz	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this measure, we have a no helmet law for motorcycles in Hawaii.

Should be revised for minors under 16 be required to wear a helmet.

**SB-30**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 8:28:58 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joseph Richard Somrak	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

Hawaii's unique climate, with its warm temperatures and high humidity, makes helmet use particularly uncomfortable. Prolonged helmet use in such conditions can cause overheating, dehydration, and even distraction due to discomfort, which could inadvertently increase the risk of accidents rather than prevent them.

Current data does not conclusively prove that helmet mandates significantly reduce fatalities or injuries in Hawaii's riding conditions. In fact, existing laws requiring helmets for riders under 18 years old already provide protection for younger, less experienced riders while allowing adults to make informed choices. Moreover, Hawaii's relatively low speed limits for motorbikes compared to other states reduce the likelihood of high-impact crashes that helmets are primarily designed to mitigate.



**SB-30**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 9:32:32 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

I am writing to express my opposition to SB30, which I believe will have unintended negative consequences for rental businesses. While I understand the intent behind this legislation, its impact will be detrimental in the following ways:

1. **Economic Burden on Small Businesses and Consumers**

SB30 will disproportionately affect small businesses, making it harder for them to remain competitive. Increased compliance costs, regulatory burdens, or financial strain will ultimately result in higher prices for consumers and potential job losses within our community.

2. **Unnecessary Government Overreach**

The provisions in SB30 introduce excessive government interference. Rather than fostering a fair and competitive marketplace, this bill could stifle innovation, limit consumer choices, and hinder economic growth. Many of the concerns addressed by SB30 can be more effectively managed through existing laws and industry standards without imposing broad new regulations.

**SB-30**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 9:35:40 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Thomas Baptiste	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I oppose SB 30 because it takes away the right of moped riders to make their own safety decisions. While helmets can reduce the risk of head injuries, adults should have the freedom to assess their own comfort, experience, and riding conditions when deciding whether to wear one. Many riders take short, low-speed trips in familiar areas, where they feel confident in their ability to ride safely. Forcing helmet use in all situations ignores the fact that responsible riders already take precautions based on their own risk assessment. Instead of a mandate, the state should focus on education and awareness programs that encourage riders to make informed safety choices without restricting personal freedom.

Rather than punishing riders with a blanket law, Hawaii should empower them through safety campaigns, incentives, and voluntary helmet programs. Providing free or discounted helmets, offering rider training, and promoting awareness of helmet benefits would be more effective and less restrictive than imposing fines or penalties for non-compliance. Riders who regularly use mopeds for commuting or recreation should be trusted to make decisions about their own safety, just as cyclists and pedestrians do. A law like SB 30 sets a precedent for unnecessary government interference in personal choices, and for that reason, I urge the committee to reject this bill in favor of education-based safety initiatives.

Mahalo,

Thomas Baptiste

Kailua, Oahu

**SB-30**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 9:47:55 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brandon Haught-Aliotti	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill because it not only puts a burden on rental companies but also forces individuals who are capable of making their own decisions.

**SB-30**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 1:09:35 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tasman Kekai Mattox	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dress for the SLIDE, not for the RIDE. Helmets are key in protecting riders.

**SB-30**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 8:32:05 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sal Torres	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support of wearing helmets when riding on mopeds.

With moped operators getting younger and younger, I believe road awareness is less and less raising the level of danger for drivers and passengers on mopeds. Helmets should be a requirement.

**SB-30**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 9:42:05 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ryan Willis	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose

**LATE**

**SB-30**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 10:03:38 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

We are on an island. It's humid and hot throughout the year.

**LATE**

**SB-30**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 12:58:39 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/19/2025 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Olivia Heltsley	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Salutations Judiciary Chair Karl Rhoads and Judiciary Vice Chair Mike Gabbard!

My name is Olivia Heltsley, and I am in strong support of Senate Bill 30. This legislative bill should be passed for the overall benefit and safety of moped drivers within our state. With the passing of this bill, there would be a decrease in moped fatalities, reduced medical expenses of moped drivers due to less head injuries, and shortens the burden on emergency responders to arrive at brutal moped accidents.

According to the Recovery Law Center, the Hawaii State Department of Transportation reports 13 deaths of motorcycles, motor scooters, or moped riders on the roads in 2023. With a helmet required to be worn, there will be fewer deaths within all ages of moped drivers since the head will be protected, preventing brain injury. Stated by the Brain Association of Missouri, it costs around 150,000 dollars in the United States for the care of a patient with a Traumatic Brain Injury. Wearing a helmet would decrease the chances of a head/brain injury and allow people to live stability in Hawaii with the money they have, rather than having to take some out of their savings for the medical bill. The Medical News Bulletin declares that the average time for the arrival of EMS personnel must be seven minutes. This leaves extremely little time for them to make their way to the scene and tend to the injuries, putting so much pressure on the personnel. If a helmet was worn, these workers would have less of a burden and extreme rush to the scene to take care of an immediate brain injury.

Therefore with all the information present, I hereby state that the Senate Bill 30 should be thoroughly considered and passed for the well being of moped drivers. It would mean a lot to Hawaii and I to have our moped drivers safe and sound.

Thank you for your consideration!