



STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
KA 'OIHANA PILI KAUA
OFFICE OF VETERANS' SERVICES
459 PATTERSON ROAD, E-WING, ROOM 1-A103
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96819-1522
Telephone Number (808) 433-0420

TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 1046, SD1
RELATING TO VEHICLE WEIGHT TAXES

PRESENTATION TO
THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

BY

RONALD P. HAN JR.
DIRECTOR, STATE OFFICE OF VETERANS SERVICES

FEBRUARY 28, 2023

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means;

I am Ron Han, Director of the State Office of Veterans Services in the State Department of Defense.

The State Office of Veterans Services (OVS) provides written testimony in **SUPPORT** of SB 1046, SD1.

This measure, if passed, would amend the vehicle weight tax exemption for noncommercial vehicles by adding an exemption for certain Veterans. This measure further states that no more than **one vehicle** should be authorized for this vehicle weight tax exemption for current National Guardsmen, Reservists and Active Duty Military Personnel. This weight tax exemption would also be extended to Veterans claiming Hawaii as their residence of record who were not dishonorably discharged. Our current military active-duty servicemembers, our Reservists, to include our National Guardsmen and Veterans have served their Nation in an all-volunteer force. Their contributions are innumerable in supporting both federal and state missions. Their support of humanitarian efforts and disaster relief, such as their integral part of COVID-19 support to keep our state safe, and their commitment to sustained defense of our Nation merit this noteworthy entitlement.

One highlight for Veterans Affairs 100% Disabled Rated member data in the State of Hawaii, indicates there are 6,370 of these service connected members who currently only receive an exemption for registration fee of \$45 a year. However, this demographic brings in over \$25M a month and over \$250M a year as a resident of this State through their service connection compensation. If this measure is passed, current active duty members, Reservists, National Guardsmen and Veterans who are not 100% service connected disabled rated will still be

required to pay the \$45 vehicle registration fee for their **one vehicle** exempted under this measure. They will also be required to pay the full amount of their vehicle registration fee and vehicle weight taxes for any other vehicles they own and are registered to them that are utilized in Hawaii.

To further define "Veteran," in addition to home of residence in Hawaii and other than dishonorable discharge eligibility, would recommend the following:

The Federal definition of a Veteran is detailed in 38 U.S.C. § 101(24) and provides: The term "active military, naval, or air service" includes—

(A) Specified periods of active duty service;

(B) Any period of active duty for training during which the individual concerned was disabled or died from a disease or injury incurred or aggravated in line of duty; and

(C) Any period of inactive duty training during which the individual concerned was disabled or died—

i) from an injury incurred or aggravated in line of duty; or

(ii) from an acute myocardial infarction, a cardiac arrest, or a cerebrovascular accident occurring during such training.

A DD Form 214, Certificate of Discharge, is the primary military source document to verify a Veteran's federal eligibility. This is also used for the issuance of Veteran Specialty Plates.

In summary, our active duty, Reservists and National Guard members, Veterans are interwoven in the community and deserve all that we can give to them for their distinguished service and sacrifice.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 1046, SD1.

The DOD supports the intent expressed in this measure as long as its implementation does not impact or replace the priorities set forth in the Executive Budget.

Ron Han, ronald.p.han@hawaii.gov; 808-433-0422

TAX FOUNDATION OF HAWAII

126 Queen Street, Suite 305

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 Tel. 536-4587

SUBJECT: MOTOR VEHICLE, Repeal military exemption and replace with exemption for veterans

BILL NUMBER: SB 1046 SD 1

INTRODUCED BY: Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Amends the vehicle weight tax exemption for noncommercial vehicles by adding an exemption for certain veterans.

SYNOPSIS: Amends section 249-6.5, HRS, to add an exemption for one noncommercial vehicle registered to a veteran who was not dishonorably discharged.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2050.

STAFF COMMENTS: The motor vehicle weight tax and registration fees are user charges designed to recover the cost of construction and maintenance of Hawaii's highway system. It should be remembered that all motorists use the state highways and should, therefore, lend a hand in paying for good and safe roads. Note well, that any exemption granted to a select group of users requires that the lost revenues be made up by those who must continue to pay. Motorists generally will have to pick up the additional costs created by this proposed exemption.

This bill offers no policy justification for the proposed exemption. So, while the exemption would provide relief to a veteran, a single mom making minimum wage, barely making ends meet, must continue to pay these fees.

Digested: 2/23/2023



Environmental Caucus of The Democratic Party of Hawai'i

To: The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
The Honorable Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Ways and Means

Re: **SB 1046, SD1 – RELATING TO VEHICLE WEIGHT TAXES**

Hearing: Tuesday, February 28, 2023, 10:00 a.m., Conference Room 211 and Videoconference

Position: **Strong Support**

Aloha, Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means:

The Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i and its 7,500 members stand in strong support of SB 1046, SD1. This measure would amend the vehicle weight tax exemption for noncommercial vehicles by adding an exemption for veterans who served in any branch of the armed services of the United States and were not dishonorably discharged.

As provided in the Democratic Party of Hawai'i Platform adopted at the DPH State Convention on May 28, 2022, this is our policy on TRANSPORTATION and U.S. MILITARY AND VETERANS' AFFAIRS:

TRANSPORTATION: We adopt transportation policies that improve our quality of life.

We believe that veterans of the United States Armed Forces should be honored and treated with dignity and respect. We support policies that provide veterans with the best possible care of both their physical and mental health. [OUR PLATFORM | DPH \(hawaiidemocrats.org\)](https://www.hawaiidemocrats.org)

Amending the vehicle weight tax exemption for noncommercial vehicles by adding an exemption for certain veterans is consistent with the policies of the Democratic Party of Hawaii Platform on Transportation and U.S. Military and Veterans' Affairs.

Please pass this measure.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

/s/ Melodie Aduja and Alan Burdick,
Co-Chairs, Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i



**TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 1046, SENATE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO VEHICLE WEIGHT TAX**

**The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
The Honorable Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means**

Tuesday, February 28, 2023 at 10:00 A.M.

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Military Affairs Council ("MAC") **supports** SB 1046, SD1, which amends the vehicle weight tax exemption for noncommercial vehicles by adding an exemption for certain veterans.

The Hawaii Military Affairs Council (MAC) was established in 1985 when the Chamber was appointed by the State to serve as the liaison to the military. The MAC advocates on behalf of Hawaii's military, and is comprised of business leaders, academic institutions, State and County officials, members of the CODEL, community leaders, labor unions and organizations and retired U.S. flag and general officers. The MAC works to support Hawaii's location as a strategic U.S. headquarters in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region which is crucial for U.S. national and homeland security.

Act 141, Session Laws of Hawaii 2008, exempts members of the National Guard, military reserves, and other armed services, who are in good standing and assigned to a unit in Hawaii, from the county vehicle weight tax for one noncommercial motor vehicle.

The intent, which is still applicable today, is to indicate to armed service members that Hawaii truly cares and supports their duty to state and nation. Incentives and benefits would influence our trained and experienced soldiers to remain in Reserve Component, active duty, and the Coast Guard especially at a time when US military is facing the greatest recruiting challenge in almost half a century.

The MAC greatly appreciates the recognition of veterans who have served our state and our nation.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support.

OAHU VETERANS COUNCIL

Oahu Veterans Center



The Gathering Place for Veterans

February 27, 2023

Hawai'i State Legislature
Senate Bill SB1046 SD1

Dear Sir/Madam,

Relating to Vehicle Weight Taxes; Noncommercial Vehicles, Veterans;
Exemption SB1046 SD1

On behalf of the Oahu Veterans Council, we support wholeheartedly the
ammendment of SB1046 SD1

Yours Sincerely,

COL. Edward Cruickshank, USA, (Ret.)
President of Oahu Veterans Council

Oahu Veterans Council Officers
President - Edward Cruickshank
2nd VP - Alma Grocki
Secretary/Center Treasurer - Brian Hawkins
Treasurer - Gary Littlefield
Director - Matt Horn
Director - Patsy Takemura
Director - Reuben Bilan
Director - Howard Sugai
Director - Gary Chamberlin

Executive Director

Claire Levinson

Veteran Service Organization Members

American Legion Dept. of HI
American Legion Post #17
American Legion Post #19
Disabled American Veterans DAV Chapter #1
Fleet Reserve Association Branch 50
Go For Broke Association
Hawaii Civil Air Patrol
Hawaii OVS Advisory Board Women's Sub-committee
Hawaii National Guard Association
Hawaii National Guard Enlisted Association
Hiki No Artillery Association
Honolulu Council of the Navy League
Marine Corps League Aloha Detachment 363
Military Officers Assn. of America Hawaii Aloha Chapter
MIS Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 110
Military Order of the Purple Heart State of Hawaii
Military Order of the Purple Heart, Rainbow Chapter
Military Order of World Wars
Military Order of Foreign Wars
Mount Hebo Members
National Assn. of Atomic Veterans
National Assn. of Uniformed Services
National Sojourners—Hawaii Chap. #9
Special Forces Assn. - Chapter VIII
Special Forces BMC Fort DeRussy
Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter #858
Veterans of Foreign Wars Dept. of HI
VFW Auxiliary Dept. of HI
VFW Post #94
VFW Post #970
VFW Post #970 Executive Committee
VFW Post#2875
VFW Auxiliary Post #2875
VFW Post#3292
VFW Post #10154
VFW Post#10276
VFW Auxiliary Post #10276
Women Marine Assoc. Wahine Koa HI 2 Chapter

Military Branch Council Liaison

CR Drumheller - OVC/USN Liaison
Moses Kaoiwi - OVC/HIANG/USA Liaison

Contributing Members

AARP
American Red Cross
First Hawaiian Bank
General David Bramlett, USA, (Ret.)
Sandy Ballard
Earl Hurrey, Historic Programs
Glenn Perry

U.S Department of Veterans Affairs

VA Honolulu Regional Office, Benefits Administration
VA Pacific Islands Health Care System
VA Vet Center, Honolulu
VA Vet Center, West Oahu, Kapolei
National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific

Hawaii State Office of Veterans Services

Claire Levinson
Executive Director
OAHU VETERANS COUNCIL AND CENTER
email:executivedirector@theOVC.org



Oahu Veterans Center, 1298 Kukila St. Honolulu, Hawaii 96818
Tel: (808) 422-4000 E-Mail: info@theOVC.org Website: www.theOVC.org

SB-1046-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2023 6:33:15 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gerard Silva	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

There should be NO WEIGHT TAXES!!!!!!

From: [mauicsm](#)
To: [WAM Committee](#)
Subject: SB 1 & SB 1046
Date: Saturday, February 25, 2023 4:36:56 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Committee,
I strongly urge you to approve both bills immediately.
Mahalo,
Gary Mobley
Vietnam Veteran

LATE

SB-1046-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2023 12:41:13 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patsy Takemura	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support this bill to assist veterans in Hawaii who have honorably served.

LATE

SB-1046-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2023 10:21:51 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bradford Baang	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

For the many Hawaii veterans who paid dearly, resulting in permanent disability, I encourage our Legislatures, with minimal acknowledgment of their sacrifice, exempt these veterans from Hawaii's vehicle registration fees, like other US States do. Many are Korean and Vietnam combat veteran 'boomers' and won't be around long to continue their suffering. They deserve a small short term temporary break for their sacrifice.

Mahalo