

Lahaina Bypass Now

LATE TESTIMONY

February 16, 2009

Chair Joseph M. Souki, Committee on Transportation (TRN)
House of Representatives, Twenty-Fifth Legislature, 2009
Hawaii

RE: H.B. #1275 - Photogrammetric Traffic Accident Investigation Technology

Aloha Chair Souki and Committee Members,

I, Stacie Thorlakson, on behalf of Lahaina Bypass Now (LBN) and all of our members, support H.B. 1275 Relating to Highway Safety. LBN is a community-based organization dedicated to developing transportation solutions for Maui. Therefore, we collaborate with the entire community, including the Maui Mayor and County Council, State Department of Transportation, Maui State Legislators, local businesses and concerned residents.

Those who live on Maui, know the frustration from commuting to and from West Maui; particularly when the road is closed for an extend amount of time, routinely lasting over four hours. Each Island faces similar traffic concerns during a motor vehicle accident that requires road closures. However, for the island of Maui, commuters are more severely impacted as there is only one major highway to and from the west side. Photogrammetric Traffic Accident Investigation Technology will help to expedite the investigation of these accidents thus increasing work efficiency and decreasing the amount of time the road is closed. The Maui Police Department estimates that with this new technology, the time that a road has to be closed could be reduced by 25-50%.

LBN supports H.B. 1275 and request the appropriate funds be acquired to purchase and train police officers in the use of Photogrammetric Traffic Accident Investigation Technology. This is a valuable investment for the safety of our entire community including local residents and visitors.

Mahalo for your time and please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

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Close-Range Photogrammetry software technology is widely accepted in accident reconstruction diagramming for quick clearance. Many state police agencies such as NM, MN, NV, FL, AZ, WI, IL, KS, NE, NH, NC and more, are successfully using this technology to reduce on-scene crash investigation time on state highways.

There are several advantages of image-based measurement over traditional measurement systems used for crash scene documentation.

Primary benefits are:

- Speed: typically 40 to 50% faster on-scene Vs an electronic distance measuring "total station".
- Cost: only about 20% of a total station. Each officer can be outfitted with a digital camera and a few low-cost ancillary tools; ready to "map" the crash upon arriving to the incident. The photogrammetric approach is fast and portable.
- Ease of use: Over the last 5 years, photogrammetry technology has been tailored and specialized for Law Enforcement (LE) use. All that's required are some basic PC skills. A good example of the technology is noted in this link: www.iwitnessphoto.com
- Accuracy: There have been many 3D accuracy tests and validation studies where close-range photogrammetry was proven by LE to be just as accurate (or even more accurate in some cases) Vs more expensive technologies such as a total station or laser scanner.
- Permanent data archival: If other evidence is needed months, or even years later and present in the pictures, photogrammetry can usually recover such critical information where other technologies cannot.
- Works extremely well combined with other 3D measurement technologies for crash scene and incident diagramming; be it terrestrial-based imaging or aerial.

In litigation, photogrammetry has passed Frye in [Western District Federal Court WL 3404950 (W. D. Wash. Nov. 22, 2006)]. Many LE and photogrammetry experts have testified in County Superior Courts - where photogrammetry was critical to the jury's overall decision.

Photogrammetry is not a 'magic solution' to all crash scene documentation. There's no panacea of measuring devices and all of them have their strengths and weaknesses. However, LE across the US have proven close-range photogrammetry software coupled with a moderately priced digital camera to be a value-added tool for the investigators "tool box" -- for fast and accurate scene documentation.

I support HB1275, as this technology has been proven by law enforcement agencies in other states.

Sincerely,
Lee F. DeChant