

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
869 PUNCHBOWL STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-5097

BRENNON T. MORIOKA
DIRECTOR

Deputy Directors
MICHAEL D. FORMBY
FRANCIS PAUL KEENO
BRIAN H. SEKIGUCHI
JIRO A. SUMADA

IN REPLY REFER TO:

February 11, 2009

TESTIMONY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

HOUSE BILL NO. 65

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

House Bill 65 creates a newly defined “downtown Honolulu business district” and prohibits the use of bicycles, electric personal assistive mobility devices, skateboards, roller skates, and other similar toys on sidewalks in this newly defined region.

The Department cannot support this bill because it creates greater confusion by creating a new special definition for the “downtown Honolulu business district” that overlaps with the existing definition of a “business district.”

Business districts are already clearly defined in Chapter 291C, Hawaii Revised Statutes and we feel it is inappropriate to create a state law that only applies to one specific limited geographic area. The Department believes it would be more appropriate to defer to the counties for such regulations.



DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD NO. 13

c/o NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION • 530 SOUTH KING STREET ROOM 400 • HONOLULU, HAWAII, 96813
PHONE (808) 527-5749 • FAX (808) 527-5760 • INTERNET: <http://www.honolulu.gov>

**Testimony of
Thomas Smyth, Board Member**

**Before the
House Committee on Transportation
Wednesday February 11, 2009
8:30 am Room 309
On
HB 65 Relating to Sidewalks**

Chair Souki, Vice Chair Awana and Members of the Committee:

The Downtown Neighborhood Board strongly supports HB 65 that restricts certain types of vehicles, bicycles and other devices from being used on sidewalks in an area of Oahu defined in the bill as the downtown business district.

The Downtown and Chinatown areas usually have many more pedestrians than other neighborhoods, walking or trying to walk, on often very narrow sidewalks. Our neighborhood has many elderly residents and shoppers who came to our area to make traditional purchases. We also see more and more tourists from cruise ships or Waikiki coming to the Aloha Tower Marketplace or Chinatown to enjoy a different visitor experience. All of them face these relatively dense walking conditions as they go through the area to reach bus stops or their residences.

This measure would help solve the problem by specifically listing the types of devices and equipment that is restricted. This should make it far easier for HPD to enforce the law. We will certainly need proper signage, similar to that in Waikiki, to inform residents and visitors of the restriction. At many locations these signs can be placed on existing poles so the cost of signage should not be excessive.

One concern is whether other similar vehicles, not listed in the bill should be included. We understand that "electric personal assistive mobility devices" is another name for a particular stand-up two-wheeled vehicle with a trademark name. There are other devices that would seem to pose the same degree of danger. These include the "YO scooter" and so-called "power chairs" and "mobility scooters." Consideration should be given to adding them to the restricted list. If some of these devices provide assistive mobility to elderly or handicapped individuals, they could be required to have a handicap permit similar to those used for parking stall access.

We urge this committee to move this bill forward, taking into consideration the ability of HPD to enforce it, the cost of signage, and the concerns of those who may feel it is an improper restriction of mobility rights.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



TO: COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
Representative Joseph M. Souki, Chair
Representative Karen Leinani Awana, Vice Chair

FROM: Eudice R. Schick
PABEA (Policy Advisory Board for Elder Affairs)

SUBJECT: HB 65 Relating To Sidewalks

HEARING: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 8:30 a.m.

POSITION: NOT IN SUPPORT of HIB 65

I am offering testimony on behalf of PABEA, the Policy Advisory Board for Elder Affairs, which is an appointed Board tasked with advising the Executive Office on Aging (EOA). My testimony does not represent the views of the EOA but of the Board.

HB 65 Sec.291C-134.5 (g) prohibits the use of motorized vehicles, used by the disabled, to use the sidewalks in the downtown Honolulu business district. Doing this means that any disabled person who uses a motorized vehicle who works, lives, has business to carry-on, or is a volunteer downtown must take their life in their hands and some how use the driving lanes to travel in. At any given time a City bus will certainly run over one of these vehicles. I am disabled, use a motorized vehicle and spend many hours downtown doing volunteer service. I cannot imagine having to do this.

Your consideration in amending Sec. 291C-134.5 (g) is appreciated.

Eudice R. Schick, Chair PABEA Legislative Committee