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January 31, 2011

TESTIMONY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

HOUSE COMMITTEE(S) ON TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC SAFETY & MILITARY AFFAIRS

HOUSE BILL NO. 929

The Department of Transportation has concerns with H.B.929, which would designate the area surrounding each rail transit station of the Honolulu high-capacity transit corridor project as the Honolulu rail transit corridor development district under the jurisdiction of the Hawaii Community Development Authority.

There are numerous rail transit stations that are located on or near property under the jurisdiction of the Department of Transportation and subject to oversight by federal agencies. The airports, for example, are heavily regulated by federal assurance grants that strictly dictate permissible activities, structures, and businesses. Likewise, a majority of DOT highways have been subsidized by federal funds. As the recipient-agency of such federal grants and funds, we are legally and contractually obligated to ensure compliance with such terms and conditions.

Furthermore, on an ongoing basis, if certain portions of DOT facilities are parceled out to fall under the jurisdiction of HCDA, then that may result in inconsistent and unreliable facilities in our airports and highways. Such discrepancies have the potential to create dangerous and unsafe conditions to the travelling public. Instead, the areas under the DOT's jurisdiction should remain intact to ensure safe, reliable, and federally-compliant transportation facilities and infrastructure.

Finally, under Revised Ordinances of Honolulu §§ 21-9.100, et seq., the City and County of Honolulu has already created a transit-oriented development ("TOD") zone, which includes parcels of land that fall within 2,000 feet of a transit station. This may present a conflict with the proposed bill, as it covers the same geographic area.

The DOT appreciates the opportunity to present its concerns regarding H.B. 929.

REVISED 1/31/11