



Representative Lynn DeCoite

Hawaii House District 13: East Maui (Pa'ia, Haiku, Keanae, Nahiku, Hana, Kipahulu, Kaupo), Moloka'i, Lana'i, Kaho'olawe and Molokini

Aloha District 13 Ohana!

As we continue through the 2019 Legislative Session there is a lot going on. Here at the Capitol we are approaching **Second Crossover** (House Bills pass through the Senate and Senate Bills pass through the House) and before you know it we'll be in **Conference Committee** (where the House and Senate hash out differences with a committee structure and timeline that can only be described as "organized chaos" at it's best). And before you know it we'll be at **Sine Die on May 2, 2019** (The closing day of the 2019 Session).

As my staff and I are busy meeting legislative deadlines here at the Capitol—we know there is still plenty going on out in the district in all of our communities. There are some fun community events coming up across the district.

- **Hana**—26th Annual East Maui Taro Festival
Saturday, April 13, 2019 from 9:00am – 5:00pm at the Hana Ball Park
- **Molokai**—Molokai Earth Day Celebration
Friday, April 19, 2019 from 5:00pm—9:00pm at the Mitchell Pauole Center, Kaunakakai
- **Haiku**— Ha'iku Ho'olaule'a & Flower Festival
Saturday, April 27, 2019 from 9:00 am – 3:00 pm at Haiku Elementary School
- **Lana'i**— Pineapple Festival
Saturday, July 6, 2019 from 12noon to 9:00pm in Dole Park

I also wanted to make sure you all knew about the Community meetings being held statewide by the Hawaii Department of Transportation (HDOT) to get public feedback on the concept of a **road usage charge (RUC)**. In the next two pages of this newsletter you'll see an info sheet, meeting dates and a FAQ sheet about the proposal. This is just a proposal right now— but one that could have a major affect on our families across the state. **I am not advocating for or against this proposal**—but I want to make sure all of you are aware and have the information so you can attend the community meetings and give your feedback to HDOT.

As always, please continue to send your concerns and ideas. My staff and I are here to serve you, we are always willing to listen and the office door is always open.

Mahalo nui loa,

Rep. Lynn DeCoite
District 13



I was honored to introduce HR 209 Commending **Faith Tuipulotu** For Her Dedication To Agriculture And Her Contributions To Farming In Hawaii.


Faith, from Hoolehua Molokai, has dedicated herself to the betterment of Agriculture in Hawai'i, through her many accomplishments and contributions to farming, conventional and organic, on Moloka'i and across the entire State of Hawai'i.

Faith is a shining example of how one can help and support ALL agriculture!

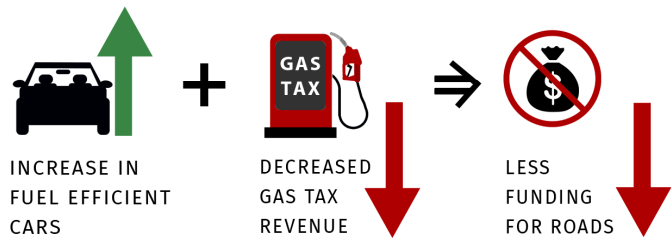
(Photo From L- R) Rosie Davis (Molokai Community Member), Faith Tuipulotu and Rep. Lynn DeCoite

HAWAII RUC PROJECT

Road usage charge



FUNDING GAP



WHAT IS A "ROAD USAGE CHARGE?"

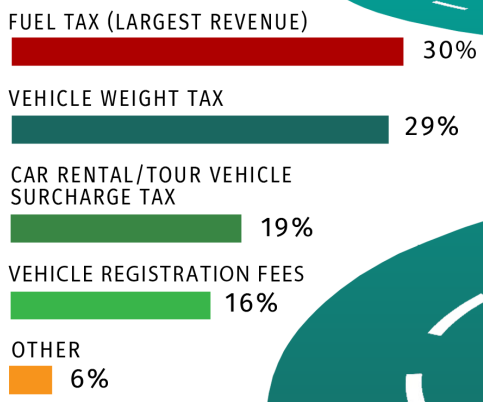
A road usage charge (RUC) is a per-mile fee that drivers pay to fund the upkeep of the roads instead of paying a tax on gasoline. RUC is similar to how we pay for other public utilities, such as water or electricity. Each driver pays for exactly how much they use.

WHY IS HAWAII RESEARCHING THIS?

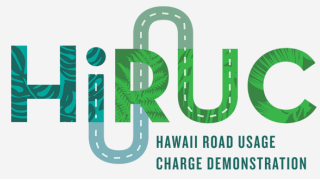
We currently pay for our roads through a gas tax. As Hawaii moves toward 100 percent renewable energy by 2045, the transition from traditional gasoline vehicles to hybrids, alternative fuel or electric vehicles likely will accelerate. Vehicles will use less gas, and electric cars will use none. While this shift will align with our state and county energy and environmental sustainability goals, it means less funding to upkeep roads. HDOT is studying RUC as a way to prepare for a future with less gas and gas tax.

2045:
CLEAN ENERGY
HAWAII

STATE HIGHWAY FUND REVENUE



"As vehicle fuel economy continues to improve, fuel tax revenue for road maintenance and repairs declines."



For more info, Please contact:

HDOT Public Affairs Office: (808) 800-3527
Project email: contact@HIRUC.org
Web site: www.HiRUC.org

COMMUNITY MEETINGS SCHEDULED FOR INPUT ON POTENTIAL ROAD USAGE CHARGE FOR HAWAII IN DISTRICT 13

MAUI
Wednesday, March 27
5:30 – 7:30 p.m.
Paia Community Center, Paia

MOLOKAI
Tuesday, April 2
5:30 – 7:30 p.m.
Kaunakakai Elementary School Cafeteria

LANAI
Thursday, April 4
5:30 – 7:30 p.m.
Lanai Community Center

Statewide Online Community Meeting - Thursday April 18, 2019 starting at 5:30pm

Check hiruc.org/ for the details.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT HiRUC

MARCH 2019

What is a road usage charge (RUC)?

Instead of paying a per-gallon gasoline tax, drivers pay to use roads based on how many miles they drive.

Why is the state studying road usage charges?

Public roadways in Hawaii are largely paid for with the gas tax, weight tax, rental vehicle surcharge, and registration fees. To fund state highways, Hawaii drivers pay a tax of 16 cents per gallon of gasoline. The federal government and counties also collect fuel taxes.

As Hawaii residents buy more fuel-efficient or alternate fuel vehicles, they consume fewer gallons of gasoline. Consequently, the amount we pay in gas tax also declines. The state and counties depend in large part on gas taxes for road upkeep and improvement. The Hawaii Department of Transportation (HDOT) is examining RUC as a possible alternative that could ensure fair and sustainable funding for our roads.

What is the Hawaii Road Usage Charge Demonstration Project (HiRUC)?

The Hawaii Road Usage Charge Demonstration project, or HiRUC, is a three-year research project led by the HDOT that has drivers experience what it would be like to pay for roads through a per-mile RUC. HiRUC looks at a possible revenue neutral replacement of the existing 16 cent-per-gallon state fuel tax with an equivalent per-mile charge.

Each vehicle's mileage will be calculated based on odometer readings collected during annual safety checks. Beginning in late 2019, vehicle owners will receive a driving report in the mail showing how many miles they drove in the past year, how much they may have paid in gas tax, and how much they might owe if the state were to collect a road usage charge instead of the gas tax. Since this is just a research and demonstration project, *no one will owe any money*.

The HDOT will also recruit volunteers who are willing to test other automated ways of collecting vehicle mileage, including plug-in vehicle mileage meters. Throughout the demonstration project, drivers will be asked what they preferred – and what would have to change – if the state were to adopt a RUC in the future. The results of the demonstration project, including direct feedback from drivers, will be shared with elected officials for consideration to solve Hawaii's long term roadway funding challenges.

Are there other options besides a road usage charge?

Yes, there are other options to fund road maintenance, including an increase in vehicle registration and weight fees, increasing the gas tax, increasing sales taxes, or diverting state money from other publicly funded programs. Some states use toll collections on the highways. HDOT has investigated the pros and cons of many of these alternatives. Some alternatives have been implemented in the past decade in other states and HDOT has been studying their progress. RUC has pros and cons, but also has promise to provide fair and sustainable highway funding.

What are other states doing?

Hawaii's fuel tax decline will be sharper than most since we are among the nation's leaders in transitioning to a cleaner, more efficient vehicle fleet. Other states are facing similar challenges in funding roads and bridges. About a dozen states have examined RUC. Several have conducted statewide pilot tests, including Oregon, California, Washington, Colorado, and Minnesota. Following the its pilots, Oregon implemented a live system with more than 1,000 volunteers in 2015, and the legislature has expanded eligibility for the program. California completed a pilot with 5,000 volunteers testing various methods of reporting mileage in 2017, and Washington completed a pilot with 2,000 volunteers in early 2019. Both states' legislatures are now considering next steps. Utah implemented new registration fees on hybrid and electric vehicles in 2019 and in 2020 will offer a RUC as an alternative to those fees. Internationally, New Zealand drivers of diesel cars have paid a per-mile fee to fund their roads since 1978.

How will road usage charges impact rural households, low-income families, households with electric cars, and visitors?

Impacts will vary depending on individual circumstances. In general and looking at an overall average, under RUC, everyone would pay the approximately same amount per mile driven as the average driver pays today in gas tax. HiRUC will study the specific impacts to help everyone understand them better and so our elected officials can make informed choices about future transportation funding policies for the state.



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District 13 At the Capitol!



Hawaii State Council on Developmental Disabilities 19th Annual A DAY AT THE CAPITOL! The DD self advocates met with the Governor and lawmakers to discuss the issues they face and the solutions they need. They always have a positive message and bring smiles to everyone. (Right) Rep. DeCoite, Josh Ige from Lana'i and Governor David Ige with the official Proclamation! (Left) Rep. DeCoite and Sen Senator Roz Baker with the DD Self Advocates and their support teams from across Maui County—Maui, Moloka'i and Lana'i were all represented!



Kick Butts Day 2019! Students from Molokai and Lanai meet with Rep. DeCoite and Jacob from Senator English's office to talk about their concerns about candy flavored tobacco products that are marketed for/targeting our teens.



Rep. DeCoite with advocates from the Alzheimer's Association at the Capitol. Advocating for caregiver funding and their #EndALZ campaign.



(top) Val Toro of Paia and Jen Bueno of Makawao meet with OM Rebecca to discuss priorities from the American Cancer Society. (bottom) Rep. DeCoite "I made it to the office just in time to see these friendly faces stop by! Our Labor Unions all working together to spread Aloha and talk about their Legislative Priorities."

