

DEPARTMENT OF CUSTOMER SERVICES  
**CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**  
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KIMBERLY M. HASHIRO  
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DEPUTY DIRECTOR

February 27, 2023

The Honorable David A. Tarnas, Chair  
The Honorable Gregg Takayama, Vice Chair  
And Members of the Committee on Judiciary  
& Hawaiian Affairs  
State Capitol, Conference Room 325  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee on  
Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs,

SUBJECT: H.B. 110, H.D.1 - Relating To License Plates  
HEARING: Wednesday, March 1, 2023, 2:00 p.m.

The City and County of Honolulu, Department of Customer Services (CSD)  
strongly supports this bill.

Pursuant to Section 6-402 of the Revised Charter of the City and County of  
Honolulu, CSD administers the motor vehicle registration program for the island of  
Oahu.

Hawaii Revised Statutes § 249-9.1 allows an individual to select the combination  
of letters and numbers for the individual's license plates. However, other than letters,  
numbers, and a hyphen, no other characters or punctuation is permitted. As written, the  
law does not allow for Hawaiian diacritical marks for Hawaiian names or words.

The Hawaiian language uses two diacritical markings. The 'okina is a glottal stop  
and kahakō is a macron, which lengthens and adds stress to the marked vowel. See  
<https://www.hawaii.edu/site/info/diacritics.php>. These diacritical markings signal the  
proper pronunciation of the Hawaiian name or word.

Last year, the Legislature passed Act 170 which requires Hawaiian diacritical  
markings in Hawaiian names and words in official State and County letterhead. We  
support further expansion of the use of Hawaiian diacritical marks in other aspects of  
government, including our State license plates.

Testimony in Support of HB110, H.D.1  
February 27, 2023  
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CSD acknowledges that the Honolulu Police Department has submitted testimony in opposition to this bill. CSD continues its discussion with HPD regarding this bill and offers the following clarification to the Committee.

The American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA) is a national organization that sets best practices guidelines for, among other things, license plates. AAMVA's *License Plate Standard, Including Best Practices for Managing Vanity and Specialty License Plates*, Second Edition, (October 2020) does not prohibit use of diacritical markings on vanity license plates and does allow for nonstandard keyboard characters to be included on license plates as "graphics."

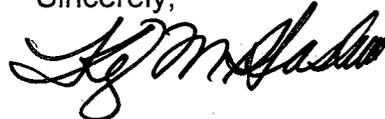
In addition, CSD reached out to AAMVA and its representative confirmed that use of Hawaiian diacritical marks may be included in vanity plates although the markings will not be considered part of the license plate number. The diacritical marks are, and will be considered "graphics" on the license plate.

As "graphics," the 'okina and kahakō are not incorporated into the license plate number, so if the word "Hawai'i" with the 'okina is used for a vanity license plate, the license plate number is recognized as "Hawaii" without the 'okina.

CSD continues to engage with HPD to ease its concern about readability and has reached out to other stakeholders as well.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of H.B. No. 110, H.D.1.

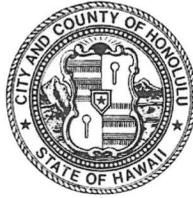
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kimberly M. Hashiro', written in a cursive style.

Kimberly M. Hashiro  
Director

**CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

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DEPUTY CHIEFS

OUR REFERENCE ST-TK

March 1, 2023

The Honorable David A. Tarnas, Chair  
and Members  
Committee on Judiciary and  
Hawaiian Affairs  
House of Representatives  
Hawaii State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street, Room 325  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Tarnas and Members:

SUBJECT: House Bill No. 110, H.D. 1, Relating to License Plates

I am Stason Tanaka, Acting Major of the Traffic Division of the Honolulu Police Department (HPD), City and County of Honolulu.

The HPD opposes House Bill No. 110, H.D. 1, Relating to License Plates.

The HPD opposes the proposal for the use of diacritical markings for Hawaiian words. This will affect the readability of the license plates, especially at a distance. In addition, the license plates can also be used in other states where certain markings may not be recognizable.

The HPD urges you to oppose House Bill No. 110, H.D. 1, Relating to License Plates. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

APPROVED:

Sincerely,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Arthur J. Logan  
Chief of Police

  
Stason Tanaka, Acting Major  
Traffic Division

**HB-110-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/27/2023 2:28:53 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/1/2023 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Dana Keawe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

support