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H.B. 2493, H.D. 2
RELATING TO COMMERCIAL DRIVER'S LICENSES

Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts

The Hawaii Department of Transportation (HDOT) **supports H.B. 2493, H.D. 2**, which amends section 286-239, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to create two new commercial driver's license (CDL) restrictions. The "R" restriction is for drivers who pass the skills test on Lanai or Molokai and are limited to operate commercial motor vehicles (CMV) on those islands only. The "Q" restriction is for CDL holders who pass the skills test with a CMV that is 18,000 pounds or less gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR).

The HDOT supports this bill in order to issue a restricted commercial driver's licenses for those who pass a limited skills test on Lanai or Molokai.

Due to limitation in equipment and roads, getting a standard CDL on Molokai and Lanai is impossible without traveling to another island for testing. This is causing issues due to high out of pocket travel costs for CDL applicants and a shortage of CDL licensed drivers. To address this, we have requested an exemption from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Association to offer modified road tests on Molokai and Lanai.

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Association has determined that the CDL road tests offered on Lanai and Molokai do not meet federal standards. Due to the lack of highway infrastructure, applicants cannot demonstrate specific on-road driving skills, including the ability to choose a safe gap for changing lanes, passing other vehicles, and crossing or entering traffic and the ability to signal appropriately when changing direction in traffic.

The Q restriction is needed as there are instances where CDL Class C applicants are completing the skills test in a CMV that is 18,000 pounds or less GVWR with a hazmat and/or passenger endorsements. This restriction will limit these drivers to operate a vehicle comparable to what they completed the skills test with and prohibit them from operating a CMV over 18,000 GVWR. The Driver Licensing offices are currently using the "I" restriction, limited other category, but want a separate designation for these license holders to avoid confusion.

We request that Section 2 be deleted from the bill as it is unnecessary.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.