



TESTIMONY BY:

EDWIN H. SNIFFEN
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

Deputy Directors
Nā Hope Luna Ho'okele
DREANALEE K. KALILI
TAMMY L. LEE
CURT T. OTAGURO
ROBIN K. SHISHIDO

STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII'
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION | KA 'OIHANA ALAKAU
869 PUNCHBOWL STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-5097

March 18, 2025
2:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Room 329 and Videoconference

S.B. 1117, H.D. 1
RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION

House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

The Hawaii Department of Transportation (HDOT) **supports** this measure with recommendations.

The HDOT is committed to administering this rebate program as it aligns with the state's clean energy goals and supports the wide-spread adoption of small electric vehicles. This program will offer lower cost and zero-emission travel and commuting alternatives to Hawaii's residents.

The HDOT recommends the following amendments:

- Amend Section 4 (k). HDOT recommends replacing the language with the following:
"Any electric mobility device rebate applicant shall provide affirmation in the form of self-affidavit that there shall be no modification or alteration to an electric bicycle or electric micro-mobility device after purchase from the manufacturer that affects its classification, performance, or compliance with the specification. The department of transportation may conduct audits to verify that there was no modification or alteration. If the department of transportation finds that there has been modification or alteration, this shall result in the disqualification of the rebate and the recipient shall repay the full rebate amount to the department of transportation."
- Amend Section 17. – "There is appropriated out of the state highway general fund the sum of \$700,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 to be deposited into the highway development special fund electric mobility subaccount."
 - HDOT prefers appropriating state general funds in the amount of \$700,000 in each fiscal year to be deposited into the highway development special fund mobility subaccount.
- Amend Section 18. HDOT recommends appropriating \$700,000 in fiscal year 2025-2026 and \$700,000 in fiscal year 2026-2027 out of the electric mobility device subaccount in the Highway Development Special Fund for the purpose of funding the electric mobility device rebate program.
- Insert Section XX to appropriate state general funds for fiscal year 2024-2025 in the amount of \$500,000, to be deposited into the Highway Development Special Fund Electric Mobility Subaccount.

- Insert Section XX to appropriate Highway Development Special Fund Electric Mobility Subaccount for fiscal year 2024-2025 in the amount of \$500,000 for the purposes of the electric mobility rebate program. Funds appropriated shall not lapse at the end of the fiscal year for which it was appropriated, but any unencumbered funds remaining shall lapse on June 30, 2028. The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department of transportation for the purposes of this Act.

The HDOT is willing to work with the committee in drafting a HD2 version of the bill that will incorporate the above-mentioned recommendations.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION SERVICES
KA 'OIHANA LAWELAWE 'ŌHUA
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

711 KAPI'OLANI BOULEVARD, SUITE 1600 • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
Phone: (808) 768-8305 • Fax: (808) 768-4730 • Website: honolulu.gov/transportation

LATE

RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR
MEIA



J. ROGER MORTON
DIRECTOR
PO'O

JON Y. NOUCHI
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
HOPE PO'O

TESTIMONY OF J. ROGER MORTON
DIRECTOR OF TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE
AND
COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
Tuesday, March 18, 2025, 2:00 PM
Conference RM 329 and Via Videoconference

TO: Rep. Scot Z. Matayoshi, Chair, Rep. Cory M. Chun, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce
Rep. David A. Tarnas, Chair, Rep. Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

RE: SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 1117, SD2, HD1, RELATING TO
TRANSPORTATION, WITH COMMENTS

The Department of Transportation Services (DTS), City and County of Honolulu (City), supports Senate Bill 1117, SD2, HD1, relating to transportation and provides the following comments.

DTS supports the HD1 version of the bill as it clarifies the definition of "electric bicycle" and establishes new definitions for "electric micro-mobility device" "electric motorcycle," and "high-speed electric device," and changes the term "motor scooter" to "motor-driven vehicle"; allows riding an electric bicycle on non-business district sidewalks at a speed not exceeding ten miles per hour; prohibits a person under the age of fifteen from operating a class 3 electric bicycle; regulates the safe behavior and operation of electric bicycles; raises the requirement for helmet use to 18 years of age; and prohibits individuals under 18 years of age from operating an electric motorcycle or motor-driven cycle.

DTS notes that while the bill adds a definition of "electric bicycle" in HRS Chapter 196, *Energy Resources*, it fails to amend or clarify the definition of "bicycle" in HRS § 291C-1, which includes low-speed electric bicycles, as defined under title 15 United State Code section 2085, and as a result, may cause conflicting, if not confusing, application of the law. DTS also notes that while a definition for "electric micro-mobility device" is provided for purposes of the electric mobility device rebate program, there are no provisions regulating their safe use and operation, nor are there any explicit provisions regulating or prohibiting the use of a "high-speed electric device" on public roads and highways. The original version of the bill allowed counties to regulate the operation of an "electric micro mobility device" in similar fashion to electric foot scooters. DTS respectfully requests clear authority that the counties have the authority to regulate the safe use and operation of an "electric micro-mobility device" and explicit statutory provisions regulating or prohibiting the use of a "high-speed electric device" on public roads and highways.

The City Council has recently adopted similar legislation for the City's Traffic Code that is aligned with the bill's intent to regulate safe use of electric bicycles on public streets and require the use of helmets for everyone under 18 years of age. Further, the bill will provide the City the flexibility to tailor its ordinances to address developing technologies.

DTS appreciates the bill's attentiveness to new devices that are propagating in the mobility sphere quicker than we can define them in legislation, and notes that the establishment of the classes in electric bikes will allow the counties to update and make specific ordinances in line with the framework of the State traffic code.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony in support with comments.

OFFICE OF CLIMATE CHANGE SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY

KE KE'ENA LOLI ANIAU MĀLAMA 'ĀINA A ME KE OLA LOA

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

650 SOUTH KING STREET, 11th FLOOR • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

PHONE: (808) 768-2277 • EMAIL: resilientoahu@honolulu.gov • INTERNET: www.resilientoahu.org

RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR
MEIA



BENJAMIN SULLIVAN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR &
CHIEF RESILIENCE OFFICER
PO'O HO'OKŌ & KAHU OLA LOA

KEALOHA FOX
DEPUTY DIRECTOR &
CHIEF RESILIENCE OFFICER
HOPE PO'O & HOPE KAHU OLA LOA

TUESDAY, MARCH 18, 2025, 2:00 P.M.

STATE OF HAWAII
HOUSE COMMITTEES ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE AND
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

**TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 1117, SD2, HD1
RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION**

BY,

BENJAMIN SULLIVAN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND CHIEF RESILIENCE OFFICER
OFFICE OF CLIMATE CHANGE, SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY

Dear Chair Matayoshi, Chair Tarnas, and Members of the Committees:

The City and County of Honolulu ("City") Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency ("Resilience Office") **supports** SB1117, SD2, HD1, which expands eligibility for the renamed Electric Mobility Rebate Program and amends the maximum rebate amounts.

This measure aligns with the City's affordability and climate action goals, as established in the City's Climate Action Plan. Ground transportation alone is responsible for one fifth of O'ahu's greenhouse gas emissions. It is also one of the highest expenses for residents, who, on average, spend almost a sixth of their annual income on transportation. This places undue burden on our low- and moderate-income residents. Electric micromobility delivers a highly effective strategy for providing residents with an affordable means to reduce their household transportation costs while at the same time alleviating parking demand, reducing carbon pollution, and easing traffic congestion. Coupled with continued investment in expansion of multimodal infrastructure, such as the recent extension of the King Street Bike Lane into downtown, encouraging e-mobility solutions is an increasingly important part of our efforts to shift away from costly dependence on single occupancy vehicles and meet our statewide carbon neutrality goals.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB1117, SD2, HD1.



Email: communications@ulupono.com

HOUSE COMMITTEES ON CONSUMER PROTECTION AND COMMERCE & JUDICIARY AND
HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Tuesday, March 18, 2025 — 2:00 p.m.

Ulupono Initiative supports and offers comments on SB 1117 SD 2 HD 1, Relating to Transportation.

Dear Chair Matayoshi, Chair Tarnas, and Members of the Committees:

My name is Micah Munekata, and I am the Director of Government Affairs at Ulupono Initiative. We are a Hawai'i-focused impact investment firm that strives to improve the quality of life throughout the islands by helping our communities become more resilient and self-sufficient through locally produced food, renewable energy and clean transportation choices, and better management of freshwater resources.

Ulupono supports SB 1117 SD 2 HD 1 and offers comments. This bill prohibits a person from operating a moped or electric motorcycle in certain areas for bicycles; renames the Electric Bicycle and Electric Moped Rebate Program to the Electric Mobility Device Rebate Program; expands eligibility and amends the maximum rebate amounts; reduces the deadline to submit an application to six months from the date of purchase; authorizes the Administrator of the rebate program to authorize grants under certain circumstances; requires applicants who are enrolled in a school, community, college, or university to demonstrate a financial need to be eligible for an additional assistance rebate; exempts certain class 3 electric bicycles from registration requirements; establishes a cap for the Electric Mobility Device Subaccount and requirements for transferring funds into the Subaccount; amends the age requirement for required helmet use from 16 to 18 years of age; prohibits a person under the age of fifteen from operating a class 3 electric bicycle; establishes rules for electric bicycle operation; allows use of electric bicycles on public sidewalks, subject to certain conditions; prohibits individuals under 18 years of age from operating an electric motorcycle or motor-driven cycle; and, changes the term "motor scooter" to "motor-driven vehicle".

We are excited to see many of these changes, but we do believe additional amendments would continue to improve the bill. These include:

- 1) Removing the percentage requirement of the subsidy** — Although having the subsidy cover 50 percent is better than 20 percent, it still limits the subsidy to those who have several hundred dollars readily available. Past survey and outreach work performed by the Hawai'i State Energy Office indicated that the up-front cost of e-bikes remains a significant barrier for people to access this mode and, by extension, all the additional job, educational, and housing opportunities that it may unlock. In addition,

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i

the current structure could unintentionally encourage more expensive e-bike purchases by people of means in order to access the largest subsidy possible. Conversely, 44% of Hawai'i households fall below the ALICE threshold¹, suggesting they may struggle to purchase an e-bike with the average price being \$1,600, based on recent data from Hawai'i Department of Transportation.²

- 2) Adding a point-of-sale component to the program** — We understand that a point-of-sale solution requires more infrastructure to implement, but recent National Institute for Transportation and Communities research found that point-of-sale mechanisms for e-bike programs are 30 percent more effective than other rebate programs, and it ensures the rebate is more universally available, regardless of personal income.³

Although the current program has helped more than 450 people, it still hasn't achieved its full potential impact.⁴ If the proposed improvements are made, we can expect to see the following benefits in Hawai'i:

- **Reduce the cost of living** — 'Ohana with e-bikes save almost \$380/year on transportation costs (mostly fuel and maintenance). When aggregated across the program potential, that is an additional \$630,000 per year in savings for participants. That's money they can choose to spend on food, clothes, and other necessities.⁵
- **Increased participation** — With more than \$540,000 remaining in the program, e-bike costs remain one of the largest barriers for lower-income residents.⁶ Meaningful subsidies enables more to participate.
- **Reduce fossil fuels consumption** — Encouraging more active transportation equates to individual reduction in driving by 7 percent by 2035 and community-wide avoidance of consuming 19,500 barrels of oil per year (enough to power 50 Hawai'i homes).⁷

Electric mobility devices can transform our community's transportation habits and help provide real transportation choices. We look forward to the continued success of the program.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata
Director of Government Affairs

¹ <https://www.unitedforalice.org/state-overview/hawaii>

² Inferred from the average subsidy amount.

³ Jones, Luke, et al. "Consumer purchase response to e-bike incentives: Results from a nationwide stated preference study."

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1361920924000713?via%3Dihub> April 24, 2024

⁴ <https://www.denverpost.com/2023/01/05/ebike-rebate-program-denver-2023/>

⁵ Impacts calculated for Hawai'i-specific inputs based on RMI's e-bike environmental and economic impact assessment tool based on the bill's proposed incentives for 3 years and up to \$2.1 million. <https://rmi.org/insight/e-bike-environment-and-economics-impact-assessment-calculator/>

⁶ Presentation available upon request from the Hawai'i State Energy Office (December 2023 virtual briefing)

⁷ Same as above, but note adapted for Hawai'i home energy consumption (2x as much as the average American home).



COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE

Rep. Scot Z. Matayoshi, Chair

Rep. Cory M. Chun, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Rep. David A. Tarnas, Chair

Rep. Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

DATE: Tuesday, March 18, 2025

TIME: 2:00PM

**PLACE: VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE
Conference Room 329**

**From: Lisa Dau, RN, Injury Prevention Coordinator
Keiki Injury Prevention Coalition**

RE: SB 1117 SD2, HD1, Relating to Transportation

I am writing to express my support for SB1117 SD2, HD1, renaming to the Electric Mobility Rebate Program, and expanding eligibility while amending maximum rebate amounts. It promotes sustainable transportation, improves safety, and ensures responsible regulation of electric mobility devices.

The provision prohibiting children under 15 from riding electric bicycles is necessary to increase safety. Younger riders lack the experience and judgment required to navigate traffic and pedestrians safely. Raising the age for helmet use from 16 to 18 aligns with best practices for head injury prevention, protecting young riders.

The bill's definition of an "electric motorcycle" and the restriction under 18 years of age from operating is an essential safety measure due to its speed and power.

This legislation promotes safer and more accessible electric mobility while ensuring that regulations are in place to protect all road users.

Thank you for your time and consideration in addressing this important issue.

Sincerely,

Lisa Dau, RN, MBA, BSN, CPSTI

KIPC, Injury Prevention Coordinator

The Keiki Injury Prevention Coalition's (KIPC) mission is to prevent and reduce injuries to children in Hawaii. <https://kipchawaii.org/>



Tuesday, March 18, 2025 at 2:00 pm
Conference Room 329 & Videoconference

House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

To: Representative Scot Matayoshi, Chair
Representative Cory Chun, Vice Chair

House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

To: David Tarnas, Chair
Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

From: Alissa Lo BSN CEN
Trauma Program Manager

Re: SB 1117 SD2, HD1

My name is Alissa Lo, and I am the Trauma Program Manager at Kapi'olani Medical Center for Women & Children (Kapi'olani). Kapi'olani is an affiliate of Hawaii Pacific Health. Kapi'olani is the state's only maternity, newborn and pediatric specialty hospital. It is also a tertiary care, medical teaching and research facility. Specialty services for patients throughout Hawaii'i and the Pacific Region include intensive care for infants and children, 24-hour emergency pediatric care, air transport, maternal-fetal medicine and high-risk perinatal care.

We write in Support of SB 1117 SD2, HD1 which, among various amendments, prohibits a person from operating a moped or electric motorcycle in certain areas for bicycles; renames the Electric Bicycle and Electric Moped Rebate Program to the Electric Mobility Rebate Program; expands eligibility and amends the maximum rebate amounts; amends the age requirement for required helmet use from 16 to 18 years of age; prohibits a person under the age of fifteen from operating a class 3 electric bicycle; establishes rules for electric bicycle operation; allows use of electric bicycles on public sidewalks, subject to certain conditions; prohibits individuals under 18 years of age from operating an electric motorcycle or motor-driven cycle; and changes the term "motor scooter" to "motor-driven vehicle".

Kapiolani Medical Center for Women and Children is the state's only designated Pediatric Trauma Center. We are seeing a significant increase in pediatric injuries resulting from electric bicycles or e-bikes. E-bikes are a new and trending injury mechanism that we

have not seen at our center prior to 2021. Between 2022 and 2023, the number of children being treated at our center for e-bike injuries have more than doubled. In the second quarter of 2024, e-bike injuries were our 2nd most common cause of injuries in the pediatric population treated at our center.

The severity of these preventable injuries is devastating, including permanent lifelong disability as well as brain death in children. Passing this bill will help to keep under-age children off of e-bikes—which essentially are motorcycles—as the name itself is misleading. Additionally, mandating the use of helmets for those who do operate electric motorcycles will reduce the severity of the kinds of injuries suffered by the operators.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



Testimony of the Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization

Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce Committee on Judicial and Hawaiian Affairs

March 18, 2025 at 2:00PM
Conference Room 329

SB 1117 SD 2 HD 1 Relating to Transportation

Dear Chairs Matayoshi and Tarnas, Vice Chairs Chun and Poepoe, and Committees Members,

The Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization (OahuMPO) **supports SB 1117 SD 2 HD 1 and offers amendments to improve the bill**, which would rename and expand the scope of the Electric Bicycle and Electric Moped Rebate Program to the Electric Mobility Rebate Program and increase the potential rebate amount.

The OahuMPO supports the proposed improvements to the electric mobility rebate program, and would like to make the following recommendations to further improve the bill:

1. Add the option for residents to qualify for additional rebate monies if people purchase a cargo e-bike or adaptive e-bike. The OahuMPO recommends the following changes to section 3 (b), 3 (h), and 3 (i), in red:
 - (b) Each eligible purchase of a new electric bicycle electric moped, adaptive electric bicycle, **electric cargo bike**, or electric micro-mobility device shall receive a rebate...
 - (h) In administering the electric mobility rebate program, the department of transportation shall provide rebates to persons who are residents of the State and fifteen years or older, who purchase a new qualifying electric bicycle, electric moped, adaptive electric bicycle, **electric cargo bike**, or electric micro-mobility device.
 - (i)(4) Purchase:**
 - a. An adaptive electric bicycle; or**
 - b. An electric cargo bike;**

In Denver, Colorado if you are a person with a disability and you are unable to use a standard e-bike, you may be eligible to save up to \$1,400 on the sale of an adaptive e-bike. Adaptive e-bikes are designed to meet individual and specialized needs of their specific riders. This is important as adaptive e-bikes tend to be more expensive than more commonly sold e-bikes. A person in Denver purchasing an electric cargo bike is also eligible for additional rebate monies, totaling \$1,400 for the purchase of a cargo e-bike.

2. Increase the rebate to \$1,000 for all residents, \$2,000 for income qualified residents, those requiring an adaptive electric mobility device, and those purchasing an electric cargo bike. The OahuMPO recommends the following changes to section 3 (b) and 3 (i), in red:

b) Each eligible purchase of a new electric bicycle, electric moped, adaptive electric bicycle, or electric micro-mobility device shall receive a rebate of either fifty per cent of the retail cost or ~~\$1,000~~⁷⁵⁰; whichever is lower; provided that no individual shall receive more than ~~\$1,000~~⁷⁵⁰ in total rebates each fiscal year unless also qualifying for the additional assistance rebate pursuant to subsection (i), in which case no individual shall receive more than ~~\$2,000~~^{1,500} in total rebates each fiscal year.

i) In administering the electric mobility rebate program, the department of transportation shall provide an assistance rebate in addition to the rebate in subsection (b). The additional assistance rebate shall be ~~\$1,000~~⁷⁵⁰ or the full retail amount, whichever amount is lower, to persons fifteen years or older who...

Residents identified "cost of e-bikes" as one of their top three barriers to owning an e-bike during community engagement conducted by the Hawaii State Energy Office. Increasing the rebate to \$1,000 will help to cover the full cost of the cheapest full-sized electric bike available locally. In addition, an increased rebate will also help to cover more of the cost of electric cargo bikes, which would help residents make even more of their trips via non-vehicular modes. Providing greater financial incentives will encourage more residents to purchase electric mobility devices and use them in place of their cars.

3. Provide the rebate at the point of sale. The OahuMPO recommends the following changes to section 3 (a), (f), and (j), in red:

(a) The department of transportation shall administer a rebate program that incentivizes the purchase of new electric mobility devices **at the point of sale.** ~~and may contract with a third-party administrator pursuant to subsection (k) to operate and manage the rebate program.~~

f) ~~Applicants~~ **Registered point of sales operators** shall submit ~~an application~~ **documentation** to the department of transportation within twelve months of the date of purchase to claim ~~the a~~ rebate from the electric [bicycle and electric moped] mobility rebate program. Failure to apply within twelve months of the date of purchase shall constitute a waiver of the right to claim the rebate.

j) The department of transportation may contract with a third-party administrator to operate and manage the electric mobility rebate program **at the point of sale.**

Recent National Institute for Transportation and Communities research found that point of sale mechanism for e-bike programs are 30 percent more effective than rebate programs.¹

The costs of vehicle ownership are significant for Hawaii residents, the public sector, and the private sector. Residents pay more than \$8,100 to own and operate a vehicle.² Hawaii households have an average of two cars per household, which means vehicle ownership costs families \$16,200 a year and represents about 20 percent of pre-tax median household income.³ In addition, vehicle ownership in Hawaii amounts to \$11.2 billion public and \$10.6 billion private costs, which is roughly \$15,000 per taxpayer (\$24,400 per household) per year, regardless of whether a person or family owns a vehicle.⁴ Having access to electric mobility devices will help reduce transportation costs for residents as it will encourage less trips taken with a vehicle and therefore has the potential to reduce operating costs and the number of vehicles needed in a household.

For the State to meet its climate and energy goals, emissions from the ground transportation sector must be reduced. In 2019, emissions from transportation activities in Hawai'i were 10.68 MMT CO₂ Eq, accounting for 54.9 percent of Energy sector emissions.⁵ Domestic aviation accounted for the largest portion of transportation emissions (46.4 percent) followed by ground transportation (37.7 percent).⁶ Greater adoption of electric mobility devices can play a significant role in reducing ground transportation emissions. According to the State Climate Commission Report, "Drivers of VMT and priority reduction strategies in Hawaii" approximately 30% of all trips taken are under 1 mile, 60% of all trips are under 3 miles, and 70% of all trips are under 5 miles.⁷

¹ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1361920924000713?via%3Dihub>

² <https://ulupono.com/media/ingpfb23/final-report-costs-of-vehicle-economy-in-hawaii-03-9-21.pdf>

³ IBID.

⁴ IBID.

⁵ https://health.hawaii.gov/cab/files/2023/05/2005-2018-2019-Inventory_Final-Report_rev2.pdf

⁶ IBID.

⁷ https://climate.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/USCA_Hawaii_VMT_strategies_Feb22.pdf

This is a tremendous opportunity for the State to support shifting those short trips made via vehicle to those that can be made via electric mobility device, by providing greater financial incentives to purchase cleaner and more efficient modes of transportation.

Denver, Colorado, which implemented a similar rebate to the one proposed in this bill saw substantial cost savings for residents and reduced greenhouse gas emissions as a result. Through a survey to rebate recipients, they found that residents are riding their e-bikes an average of 26 miles each week, replacing 3.4 car round trips.⁸ They estimated that new e-bikes replaced 100,000 vehicle miles traveled each week.⁹ The survey also indicated that income-qualified residents used their e-bikes nearly 50% more than the standard voucher recipient.¹⁰ As Denver residents were able to swap some of their vehicular trips with those made via electric bikes, they were able to save money, as well as reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

The OahuMPO is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) on the island of Oahu responsible for carrying out a multimodal transportation planning process, including the development of a long-range (25-year horizon) metropolitan transportation plan, referred to as the Oahu Regional Transportation Plan (ORTP), which encourages and promotes a safe, efficient, and resilient transportation system that serves the mobility needs of all people and freight (including walkways, bicycles, and transit), fosters economic growth and development, while minimizing fuel consumption and air pollution ([23 CFR 450.300](#)).

This bill is consistent with several goals of the Oahu Regional Transportation Plan including support for active and public transportation, promoting an equitable transportation system, and improving air quality and protecting environmental and cultural assets.¹¹ Providing a more robust rebate for electric mobility devices, such as e-bikes and e-mopeds will help more residents purchase cleaner and more efficient modes of transportation. More residents acquiring electric mobility devices is particularly important to help the State address cost of living and equity concerns as well as meeting its carbon net-negative goal by 2045.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

⁸ <https://www.denvergov.org/Government/Agencies-Departments-Offices/Agencies-Departments-Offices-Directory/Climate-Action-Sustainability-Resiliency/Cutting-Denvers-Carbon-Pollution/Sustainable-Transportation/Electric-Bikes-E-Bikes-Rebates>

⁹ IBID.

¹⁰ IBID.

¹¹ https://oahumpo.org/?wpfb_dl=2215

**ADDRESS**

3442 Wai'ālae Ave., Suite 1
Honolulu, HI 96816

PHONE

808-735-5756

EMAIL

bicycle@hbl.org

HOUSE COMMITTEES ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE AND JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
Tuesday, March 18, 2025 – 2:00pm

Hawai'i Bicycling League Supports SB 1117, SD 2 HD 1, Relating to Transportation

Aloha Chairs Matayoshi and Tarnas, Vice Chairs Chun and Poepoe, and Committee Members,

My name is Travis Counsell, and I am the Executive Director of the Hawai'i Bicycling League (HBL). We are a non-profit organization founded in 1975 with the mission of enabling more people to ride bicycles for health, recreation, and transportation. We strive to create communities across our islands that have safe, accessible, and inclusive environments for people to bike, walk, and roll.

Hawai'i Bicycling League supports SB 1117, SD2, HD1, which offers necessary and expanded eligibility and formula payouts for a renamed Electric Mobility Rebate Program. The bill also makes key updates to HRS to include a three-tier classification system for e-bikes, which is a standard used across most states in the nation.

Electric bicycles, electric mopeds, and other electric mobility devices serve as a way to reduce the costs of living for Hawai'i residents while also working towards the State's climate goals. These devices can reduce the need to own a vehicle, often allowing households to eliminate a vehicle and save upwards of \$10,000 per year. They can also reduce the number of vehicles being used for short trips, therefore reducing parking demand and vehicle traffic.

We offer comments for your consideration that could improve this bill:

- **Further define high speed / out of class devices** such as “electric motorcycle” to distinguish from low-speed electric bicycles. These high speed and high power devices are not bicycles and lead to numerous safety concerns. They **should not be considered an electric bicycle**.
- **Consider defining the term “bicycle with motor” in HRS**; “bicycle(s) equipped with motor(s), motorized bicycle, and bicycle with motor attached” to mean only an electric motor exceeding 750 watts or any combustion engine.” These devices should be expressly prohibited from public street, highway, alley, path, or trail, including a bikeway unless they meet the definitions of another approved device. However, “bicycle with motor” should not include low-speed class 1, 2, or 3, electric bicycles.
- Consider point-of-sale rebate options to reduce barriers, especially for lower-income households.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony. We encourage your support for **SB 1117** which will help people to choose more affordable and sustainable transportation options.

Ride Aloha,

Travis Counsell, Executive Director



Testimony for Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
Support for SB1117 - Relating to Transportation
House Committee on and Consumer Protection and Commerce (CPC) and
House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs (JHA)
Tuesday, March 11th, 2025 at 2PM

Dear Chairs, Vice Chairs, and members of the CPC and JHA committees,
Mahalo for the opportunity to express **SUPPORT for SB1117**. As currently proposed, the bill would rename and expand the scope of the existing rebate program and increase the rebate amount from \$500 to \$750. We have also provided suggested amendments to strengthen the bill.

This testimony is being submitted on behalf of the Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice. Our organization works to build a Hawai'i where everyone has genuine opportunities to achieve economic security and fulfill their potential. Affordable, accessible, and safe transportation is crucial for fostering economic equality as it enables individuals of all backgrounds to access employment opportunities, education, and essential services.

Hawai'i Appleseed is advocating for SB1117 as electric bicycles and other mobility devices have been found to:

- **Reduce household transportation costs.** In Hawai'i, owning a personal vehicle costs about \$8,100 per year.¹ Notably, Hawai'i households own an average of two cars per household, which means vehicle ownership costs families \$16,200 per year, representing about 20 percent of pre-tax median household income.² Electric mobility devices have significantly lower operating costs compared to gas-powered vehicles, requiring minimal maintenance and no fuel expenses. Additionally, the electric assist feature allows riders to cover longer distances with less physical effort, reducing reliance on other transportation modes and associated costs like parking fees and public transit fares. As an example, in the spring of 2022, the City and County of Denver launched an ebike rebate program. In just nine months, 4,734 Denver residents became new ebike owners who cumulatively saved an estimated \$1 million from avoided fuel and electricity costs.³
- **Reduce traffic and vehicle emissions.** For the State to meet its climate and energy goals, emissions from the ground transportation sector must be reduced. Electric mobility devices are

¹ Yerton, Steward. (2020). *Why It Costs So Much To Own A Car In Hawaii*. Honolulu Civil Beat. Available at: <https://www.civilbeat.org/2022/03/why-it-costs-so-much-to-own-a-car-in-hawaii/>.

² Steward (2020)

³ City and County of Denver. (2022) *Denver's 2022 Ebike Incentive Program: Results and Recommendations*.

currently one of the most effective tools to decrease car dependency. In Denver, officials found that participants of their city's ebike rebate program on average used their bike to replace 3.4 car trips and traveled 21.6 miles weekly. They also found that income-qualified residents were using their ebikes more than standard voucher recipients and replaced more than 40% of their car trips using their ebike. For these reasons, a recent article from the Bloomberg City Lab went so far to state that "No mobility innovation in recent memory offers a comparable opportunity to simultaneously boost health, protect the environment and improve urban quality of life."⁴

Additionally, to improve the bill and further its impact, Hawai'i Appleseed recommends:

- Increase the rebate to \$1,000 for all residents, \$2,000 for income qualified residents, those requiring an adaptive electric mobility device, and those purchasing an electric cargo bike.
- Add the option for residents to qualify for additional rebate monies if people purchase a cargo e-bike or adaptive e-bike.
- Adding a point-of-sale component to the program.

We commend the State of Hawai'i for implementing the rebate program in 2023 and look forward to its expansion. Increasing the scope of this program will undoubtedly increase residents' access and usage of electric bikes and other mobility devices and will support the state in achieving its ambitious climate and energy goals.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.



Abbey Seitz

Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
Director of Transportation Equity

⁴ Zipper, David. (2023). *The Untapped Power of E-Bike Rebates*. Bloomberg City Lab. Available at: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-07-07/release-the-e-bike-rebates>.

SB-1117-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/17/2025 7:44:50 AM

Testimony for CPC on 3/18/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John Stallings	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Good Day & Mahalo for your hard work on reigning in the issues with e-bikes & electric motorcycles. I believe this is a very important issue, especially the high powered electric motorcycles. Aside from a community safety issues, failure to set and enforce the rules/laws will cost the city MILLIONS OF DOLLARS in payments for liability claims.

Public elementary & middle schoolers should be banned from riding ebikes on to campus. 99% of them are not old enough to ride legally ride ebikes, yet we are forced to accept liability when something goes wrong. All police need to do is show up at the lower level schools and write tickets to underage riders. Like shooting fish in a barrel!

Please pass this bill to help our community!