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February 4, 2025  
3:00 P.M.  
State Capitol, Room 224

**S.B. 1123**  
**RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION**

Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts

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The Department of Transportation (DOT) **supports S.B. 1123**, which requires the State Highway Modernization and Safety Council to conduct a thorough evaluation of vehicle characteristics and develop a set of standards to identify high-risk vehicles. Requires a report to the Legislature.

The DOT supports this bill as this evaluation can provide recommendations that will better protect vulnerable roadway users such as pedestrians, bicyclists and others that may not be easily seen by high-risk vehicles.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



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SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS  
Tuesday, February 4, 2025 – 3:00pm

**Hawai'i Bicycling League Supports SB 1123, Relating to Transportation**

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Committee Members,

My name is Eduardo Hernandez, and I am the Advocacy 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 1123**, which rightly begins to address the real threat to vulnerable road users - there are more cars and trucks on our roadways, they are getting heavier, have higher profiles and are generally more lethal than in the past. The state needs expert guidance to develop standards to identify high-risk vehicles and issue actionable recommendations for the legislature to improve vehicle safety in Hawai'i.

For decades, transportation policy has focused on prioritizing comfort for car and truck drivers. This has been an effort by private industry and government which has resulted in larger and heavier vehicles, as well as roads that encourage speeding. This bill helps to pivot away from this focus and assign an expert government panel - the Highway Safety Modernization Council (HSMC) to begin this work.

HBL supported the establishment of the HSMC during the 2023 legislative session. Today, we support authorizing them to carry out this important work that will help policymakers and the public to better understand the real threats on our roadways.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony. We encourage your support for **SB 1123**.

Ride Aloha,

**Eduardo Hernandez**  
Advocacy Director



**SanHi**

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**LATE**

DATE: February 3, 2025

TO: Senator Chris Lee  
Chair, Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts

Senator Lorraine Inouye  
Vice Chair, Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts

*Submitted Via Capitol Website*

FROM: Tiffany Yajima

RE: **S.B. 1123 – Relating to Transportation**  
**Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 at 3:00 p.m.**  
**Conference Room: 224**

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Dear Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts,

On behalf of the Alliance for Automotive Innovation (“Auto Innovators”) we submit this testimony in **opposition** of S.B. 1123, Relating to Transportation, which requires the State Highway Modernization and Safety Council to conduct a thorough evaluation of vehicle characteristics and develop a set of standards to identify high-risk vehicles with a report to the Legislature on recommended legislation.

The Alliance for Automotive Innovation represents the full auto industry, a sector supporting 10 million American jobs and five percent of the economy. From the manufacturers producing most vehicles sold in the U.S. to autonomous vehicle innovators to equipment suppliers, battery producers and semiconductor makers – the association is committed to a cleaner, safer and smarter personal transportation future.

Auto Innovators appreciate efforts to enhance pedestrian safety. Driver, passenger and pedestrian safety is top priority for automakers who have voluntarily developed and introduced crash avoidance technologies that make roads safer for pedestrians and road users. In Hawaii, Auto Innovators supported the establishment of the Hawaii Highway Safety and Modernization Council, codified in 2023 as Act 242, to assist in advising the State on important matters relating to traffic safety and transportation infrastructure.

Motor vehicle safety is regulated by Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) and by regulation under the U.S. Department of Transportation National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). These federal safety standards regulate the minimum safety performance requirements for motor vehicles or items of motor vehicle equipment. These requirements exist to protect the public against unreasonable risk of crashes occurring due to the design, construction, or performance of motor vehicles, and are intended to protect against unreasonable risk of death or injury if crashes do occur.

Auto Innovators is concerned that this measure attempts to develop recommendations for vehicle safety standards, tailored specifically to Hawaii's needs, based on a unique set of to-be defined criteria for "high risk vehicles." It is also unclear if the Council has the technical expertise needed to evaluate vehicle characteristics, and if it is practicable for the Council to evaluate whether every make and model of every vehicle in the entire state to determine if it would fall into the category of "high risk."

Furthermore, this measure also calls for the establishment of methods to mitigate pedestrian risks and ensure that the Council's recommendations inform policies at federal, state, and county levels. Auto Innovators is uncertain how the Council will be able to accomplish this goal since vehicles are produced according to nation-wide manufacturing specifications.

Because vehicle standards are better addressed in federal regulation, Auto Innovators has concerns with this measure and asks the committee to hold this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.