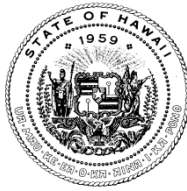


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII'
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION | KA 'OIHANA ALAKAU
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ROBIN K. SHISHIDO

Tuesday, February 17, 2026
9:30 a.m.
State Capitol, 430

HB2027
RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION

House Committee on Transportation

The Department of Transportation (DOT) supports House Bill 2027, relating to vehicle regulations and enforcement.

This bill addresses several critical issues in traffic safety and vehicle compliance. It prohibits driving on roadway shoulders except in specified circumstances, which will help maintain the intended use of these areas for emergency vehicles and breakdowns. The bill also grants authority to the DOT and county police departments to impound vehicles with long-expired registrations, which will aid in removing potentially unsafe or abandoned vehicles from our roads.

The DOT particularly supports the increased penalties for out-of-state vehicle registration violations. This provision will encourage compliance with Hawaii's registration requirements and ensure that all vehicles operating on our roads contribute fairly to the maintenance of our transportation infrastructure.

The establishment of minimum and maximum statutory penalties for high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane violations is another positive step. Clear and consistent penalties will deter misuse of HOV lanes, helping to maintain their effectiveness in reducing traffic congestion and promoting carpooling.

We believe these measures will collectively enhance road safety, improve traffic flow, and ensure greater compliance with vehicle registration and operation laws in Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.



**TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2026**

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

H.B. NO. 2027, RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION.

BEFORE THE:

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

DATE: Tuesday, February 17, 2026 **TIME:** 9:30 a.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 430

TESTIFIER(S): Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or
Michael J.S. Moriyama, Deputy Attorney General

Chair Kila and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General (Department) provides the following comments.

This bill prohibits vehicles from driving on the shoulder of a roadway, except in certain circumstances, and authorizes the Department of Transportation and county police departments to impound or seize vehicles with expired registrations of three years or more.

Section 1 of the bill amends chapter 291C, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), by adding two new sections, first to prohibit the use of shoulder lanes and second to enforce expired vehicle registrations. Subsection (a) of the second new section on page 2, line 2, through page 3, line 7, authorizes the Department of Transportation and county police departments to impound a vehicle with an expired registration of three years or more or seize a vehicle with an expired registration of five years or more when the vehicle is parked on a public roadway or in a commercial parking lot that is open to the public. The bill also allows the owner to redeem the impounded or seized vehicle. The bill authorizes a seized vehicle to be disposed of if not redeemed by the owner. If no valid ownership of a seized vehicle is proven, then the bill requires fifteen-day public notice prior to disposal.

The Department is concerned, first, that the bill does not require registration status to be verified by the Department of Transportation or the county departments of

finance prior to impoundment or seizure. An expired registration sticker (emblem) may not mean that the vehicle has not been registered for three or five years or more or is not currently registered. Second, the bill does not specify exactly how a vehicle is to be impounded or seized in that it does not specify whether the vehicle is to be towed, who is to do the towing, where the vehicle will be stored, and whether there is any limit on the cost of storage and other charges incident to the impoundment or seizure. Third, the bill raises constitutional issues because it does not provide specific procedures for notifying a vehicle owner that a vehicle has been impounded or seized, including who has the duty to provide notice, and what the owner must do to redeem and recover the impounded or seized vehicle. Fourth, the bill does not provide for disposing of an impounded vehicle if no owner redeems it. Fifth, the bill allows a seized vehicle to be disposed of in the same manner as when a vehicle is put up for public auction and for which no bid is received. However, it is unclear how the auction is to be conducted, who conducts the auction, what notice is to be provided prior to auction, and what specific statute, regulation or ordinance establishes the manner in which the vehicle is to be disposed of when no bid is received. Sixth, for a seized vehicle, it is unclear what "no valid ownership" means. It is also unclear whether the "fifteen-day notice" means notice must be published for fifteen days or whether a single notice must be published at least fifteen days prior to disposal of a seized vehicle.

To address these issues, the Department recommends amending the second new section proposed to be added to chapter 291C, HRS, in section 1 of the bill, on page 2, line 2, through page 3, line 19, by amending subsections (a) through (c) to read as follows (stricken material to be deleted from the bill; new material is underscored):

(a) Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, after verifying the registration status of a vehicle, the department of transportation and the county police departments may[:

(1) ~~For a vehicle with an expired registration of three years or more that is parked on a public roadway or in a commercial parking lot that is open to the public, impound the vehicle, during which time the vehicle shall be subject to redemption by its owner by payment of an updated registration, together with any penalties incurred and the cost of storage and other charges incident to the impoundment of the vehicle; and~~

- ~~(2) For a vehicle with an expired registration of five years or more that is parked on a public roadway or in a commercial parking lot that is open to the public, seize and dispose of the vehicle, during which time the vehicle shall be subject to redemption by its owner by payment of an updated registration, together with any penalties incurred and the cost of storage and other charges incident to the seizure of the vehicle. If the owner of the vehicle fails to redeem the vehicle within ten days after seizure, the vehicle shall be disposed of in the same manner as when a vehicle is put up for public auction and for which no bid is received; provided that if no valid ownership is proven, a fifteen-day notice shall be made available to the public prior to the disposal of the vehicle.]~~

impound a vehicle that is parked on a public roadway or in a commercial parking lot that is open to the public and cause the vehicle to be towed subject to section 290-11(b) to (i) when, prior to towing the vehicle, the department of transportation or a county department of finance has verified that the vehicle is not currently registered and has not been registered for the three previous consecutive years or more.

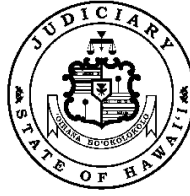
(b) [A law enforcement officer may use a traffic stop for the purpose of verifying the registration status of a vehicle in the enforcement of subsection (a)] The owner of the vehicle may redeem the vehicle by registering the vehicle prior to recovering the vehicle under section 290-11 and shall present the vehicle's current registration when recovering the vehicle.

(c) [Enforcement of this section shall not apply to vehicles on private property that is not open for public use.] The owner of the vehicle shall not be liable for any towing or storage charges under section 290-11 if the vehicle was improperly impounded or towed and shall be allowed to recover the vehicle upon presenting the vehicle's current registration without payment to the towing company. The towing company shall allow a vehicle owner to enter the vehicle to obtain the vehicle's current registration certificate to establish ownership.

We have no recommended changes to subsections (d) and (e).

We respectfully ask the Committee to pass this bill with the recommended amendments.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this bill.



The Judiciary, State of Hawai'i

Ka 'Oihana Ho'okolokolo, Moku'āina 'o Hawai'i

Testimony to the House Committee on Transportation

Representative Darius K. Kila, Chair
Representative Tyson K. Miyake, Vice Chair

Tuesday, February 17, 2026, 9:30AM
State Capitol, House Conference Room 430

By
Michelle Acosta
Deputy Chief Court Administrator
Hawai'i State Judiciary

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

Bill No. and Title: House Bill No. 2027, Relating to Transportation

Purpose: Prohibits vehicles from driving on the shoulder of a roadway, except in certain circumstances. Authorizes the Department of Transportation and county police departments to impound vehicles with expired registrations of three years or more and seize and dispose of vehicles with expired registrations of five years or more, under certain conditions. Requires an annual report to the Legislature. Increases the fine amount for owners of out-of-state motor vehicles who fail to register the vehicle in the State. Establishes minimum and maximum statutory penalties for violations relating to the use of high occupancy vehicle lanes.

Judiciary's Position:

The Judiciary takes no position on the merits of this measure and offers the following comments for consideration.

As currently written, the measure would take effect immediately upon approval. The Judiciary respectfully requests that the effective date be set no earlier than July 1, 2027. This additional time is critical to ensure proper implementation by the courts, which would include necessary updates to the Judiciary Information Management System (JIMS) and traffic payment system, and the adjustment of operational resources to account for a possible increase to the traffic court calendar.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 2027.

DEPARTMENT OF CUSTOMER SERVICES
KA 'OIHANA LAWELawe KUPA
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

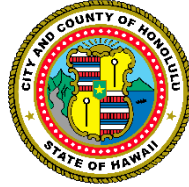
ADMINISTRATION

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KIMBERLY M. HASHIRO
DIRECTOR
PO'O

MEGAN JOHNSON
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
HOPE PO'O

RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR
MEIA



February 13, 2026

The Honorable Darius K. Kila, Chair
The Honorable Tyson K. Miyake, Vice Chair
and Members of the House Committee on Transportation
State Capitol, Conference Room 430
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Kila, Vice Chair Miyake, and Members of the House Committee on Transportation:

SUBJECT: H.B. No. 2027 - Relating To Transportation
HEARING: Tuesday, February 17, 2026, 9:30 a.m.

The City and County of Honolulu, Department of Customer Services (CSD) respectfully offers **comments** to H.B. No. 2027 for your committee's consideration. Pursuant to Section 6-402 of the Revised Charter of the City and County of Honolulu, CSD Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) administers the motor vehicle registration program for the island of O'ahu. While CSD appreciates the intent of the proposed legislation, we have concerns regarding its application and its legal implications.

The provisions in this measure relating to expired registration enforcement, impoundment, seizure, and disposal of vehicles will require careful coordination among the Department of Transportation, county police departments, and county motor vehicle registration offices.

Implementation of these provisions will require a comprehensive review of existing towing, storage, notice, redemption, and disposal procedures to ensure they are consistent with current statutes, ordinances, administrative rules, and contractual agreements. Existing procedures, laws, rules, and contractual agreements may need to be amended to address verification of registration status, notice requirements, redemption timelines, fee calculations, and coordination of records between

enforcement agencies and DMV systems. In addition, updates to registration databases, system programming, and staff training will be necessary to properly reflect impoundment and seizure actions and to ensure accurate processing.

With respect to impoundment, the authority of towing and storage companies to withhold vehicles from registered owners must be clearly defined to avoid confusion or inconsistent application. Statutory language should clearly address redemption rights, documentation requirements, timelines, and lawful retention authority to ensure due process protections and minimize disputes between vehicle owners, enforcement agencies, and tow operators.

Given these significant operational and legal considerations, we respectfully request the Legislature provide clear guidance on funding, resources and the necessary time available for implementation. CSD DMV urges the Legislature to consider the impact on county operations and, should this matter move forward, requests a reasonable and adequate amount of time for the counties to research and assess implementation requirements, staffing, funding requirements, information technology and other resource impacts, necessary updated administrative procedures, staff training, and good public outreach.

With these considerations in mind, CSD appreciates the opportunity to comment on H.B. No. 2027.

Sincerely,

for Kimberly M. Hashiro
Director

Law Office of Georgette A. Yaindl, LLC
Georgette Anne Yaindl 8940
P.O. Box 307
Kailua-Kona Hawai'i 96745-0307
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February 15, 2026

Rep. Darius K. Kila,, Chair
Rep. Tyson K. Miyake, Vice Chair
Committee on Transportation
House of Representatives
33rd Legislature, State of Hawai'i

via: <http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov>

Dear Committee leadership and members,

Re: **COMMENTS ON HB2027 RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION**

DATE: February 13, 2026 TIME: 1:00 PM

PLACE: Conference Room 225 & Videoconference

This bill proposes some amendments to chapter 291C, our Statewide Traffic Code.

Section 1 “shoulder lanes” would prohibit “vehicles” from being driven on the shoulder. However, “‘Vehicle’ means every device in, upon, or by which any person or property is or may be transported or drawn upon a roadway or highway, *including* mopeds and *bicycles*”, HRS § 291C-1 (emphasis added). Unfortunately, transportation by bicycle often requires use of the shoulders. “Passenger cars,” as defined at HRS § 286-2, meets the mark of the presumed intent of this proposed amendment.

Section 1 “expired registration” subsection (a) contemplates impoundment of vehicles based on aged, expired registrations, but fails to provide for an expenditure of State funds to the counties who will be obligated to perform the work. Subsection (b) is unnecessary because it is a statement on existing “traffic stop” law because there is no privacy interest in a license plate. Subsection (d) authorizes rule making by the state DOT and county police departments but county police departments do not have rulemaking authority

Mahalo for your attention the matter of derelict passenger cars and scofflaw passenger car owners. Aloha `āina.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.

Sincerely,

/s/ Georgette A. Yaindl
GEORGETTE ANNE YAINDL