
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that ground
2 transportation makes up thirty-eight per cent of transportation
3 emissions in the State and light-duty vehicles make up eighty-
4 five per cent of those emissions. The legislature recognizes
5 that reducing vehicle miles traveled by commuters will be a key
6 component to meeting the State's decarbonization goals and legal
7 requirements outlined in *Navahine F. v. Hawaii Department of*
8 *Transportation* (Hawaii Cir. Ct. 2024), which can be achieved by
9 promoting the use of public transit.

10 The legislature further finds that state employees have
11 limited commuter benefits. In 2024, the house of
12 representatives adopted House Resolution No. 191, Regular
13 Session of 2024, which urged the department of accounting and
14 general services and department of human resources development
15 to evaluate subsidizing public transit for public employees.
16 Currently, the only transportation benefit the State offers is a
17 pre-tax deduction of a state employee's paycheck to purchase a



1 transit pass or pay for parking as allowed by the Internal
2 Revenue Service. The State indirectly subsidizes employee
3 parking stalls in downtown Honolulu on average between \$130 to
4 \$238 a month and provides no subsidy for employees using public
5 transit, carpooling, walking, biking, and other modes of
6 transportation that reduce transportation emissions.

7 The legislature also finds that opting for public transit
8 and active modes of transportation over private vehicles for
9 commutes can help employees save money on fuel, insurance,
10 parking, and vehicle maintenance costs, which can also help
11 reduce the cost of living. Additionally, active modes of
12 transportation can enhance quality of life, health, and well-
13 being through physical activity.

14 The legislature also finds that state employee focus groups
15 conducted in July and August of 2024 by the Oahu metropolitan
16 planning organization revealed that fifty-four per cent of
17 respondents would ride public transit to work if public transit
18 passes were fully subsidized or discounted and forty-eight per
19 cent of respondents stated they would walk, ride a bike, or
20 scooter to work with a financial incentive.



1 The legislature notes that other jurisdictions such as
2 Redmond, Washington and Nashville, Tennessee have successfully
3 implemented free public transportation options for government
4 employees. These jurisdictions have also reported increased
5 employee retention and decreased tardiness or absences upon
6 participating in the commuter benefits program.

7 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to require and
8 appropriate funds for the department of transportation to
9 establish a one-year pilot program to offer fully subsidized
10 transit passes for department employees.

11 SECTION 2. (a) The department of transportation shall, in
12 coordination with each county's transportation agency or
13 department, establish a one-year pilot program to offer fully
14 subsidized public transit passes as a benefit option for all
15 department of transportation employees. The public transit
16 passes shall be integrated into department employee badges in
17 accordance with existing transit pass badging programs.

18 (b) The department of transportation shall submit a report
19 of its findings and recommendations, including any proposed
20 legislation, related to the implementation of and participation



1 in the pilot program to the legislature no later than twenty
2 days prior to the convening of the regular session of 2027.

3 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
4 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$150,000 or so much
5 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 for the
6 department of transportation to establish a pilot program to
7 offer fully subsidized public transit passes as a benefit option
8 for department employees.

9 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
10 transportation for the purposes of this Act.

11 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the state highway
12 fund established pursuant to section 248-8, Hawaii Revised
13 Statutes, the sum of \$150,000 or so much thereof as may be
14 necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 for the department of
15 transportation to establish a pilot program to offer fully
16 subsidized public transit passes as a benefit option for
17 department employees.

18 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
19 transportation for the purposes of this Act.



1 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000.



Report Title:

DOT; Public Transit Passes; Department Employees; Pilot Program;
Appropriation

Description:

Requires and appropriates funds for the Department of
Transportation to establish a pilot program to offer fully
subsidized public transit passes for department employees.
Requires a report to the Legislature. Effective 7/1/3000.
(HD1)

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not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

