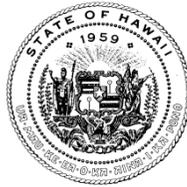


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Thursday, March 12, 2026
3:01 PM
State Capitol, 229

HB1166, HD1
RELATING TO AUTOMATED SPEED ENFORCEMENT SYSTEMS PROGRAM

Senate Committee on Transportation

The Department of Transportation (DOT) strongly supports H.B. 1166, H.D. 1, which appropriates \$5,000,000 from the State Highway Fund to the Automated Speed Enforcement Systems Program Special Fund for fiscal year 2025-2026. This funding is critical to advancing the state's efforts to reduce speed-related motor vehicle fatalities and injuries, aligning directly with the goals of Act 112, Session Laws of Hawaii 2024, which established this specialized program.

Speeding continues to be a significant contributing factor to traffic fatalities and serious injuries on our roadways. According to our preliminary 2024 state data, 42 percent of Hawaii's traffic fatalities were speed-related. The implementation and maintenance of automated speed enforcement systems represent a proven and effective strategy to encourage responsible driving behaviors and mitigate dangerous speeding patterns.

The bill ensures the continuity and sustainability of this important initiative with provisions allowing unexpended appropriations to remain available for use beyond the fiscal year, supporting long-term planning and program stability. By funding this essential safety measure, the state reaffirms its commitment to improving road safety for all users and reducing preventable tragedies on our highways.

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

HB-1166-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/7/2026 6:00:59 PM

Testimony for TRS on 3/12/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tamara Mckay	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Opposition to HB1166 HD1

Automated Speed Enforcement Systems Program

I respectfully submit testimony in opposition to HB1166 HD1.

This measure appropriates funds from the State Highway Fund to support the Automated Speed Enforcement Systems Program by depositing funds into the automated speed enforcement program special fund for the establishment and continued operation of the system.

HB1166_HD1_

While improving roadway safety is a goal shared by all residents of Hawai‘i, automated speed enforcement programs raise several significant concerns that warrant careful consideration before additional funding is authorized.

First, automated speed enforcement systems create a technological infrastructure capable of capturing images of vehicles and license plates and storing this data in centralized systems. Even when implemented for traffic enforcement, such systems represent an expansion of automated surveillance capabilities. Many residents are increasingly concerned about the long-term implications of expanding government systems capable of monitoring and recording vehicle movements. Policymakers should be cautious about expanding surveillance infrastructure without clear safeguards and limits.

Second, automated enforcement raises legitimate due process concerns. Citations generated by speed cameras are typically issued to the registered owner of the vehicle rather than the individual operating the vehicle at the time of the alleged violation. This shifts the burden onto vehicle owners to dispute citations and identify drivers, which differs from traditional traffic enforcement where an officer observes the violation and cites the driver directly. Ensuring fairness in enforcement is essential to maintaining public trust.

Third, automated enforcement programs often create financial incentives that can shift the focus from safety to revenue generation. When enforcement programs rely on citation revenue or continued appropriations tied to ticket volume, the structure can unintentionally encourage the issuance of more citations rather than reducing violations over time. A program designed to improve safety should ideally generate fewer citations as driver behavior improves. If program

funding becomes dependent on ticket revenue, the incentive structure can work in the opposite direction.

Fourth, research on automated speed enforcement frequently shows that safety improvements are localized to areas immediately surrounding camera locations. Drivers may slow down near cameras but resume speeding once they pass them. This means that while localized improvements may occur, the broader systemwide impact on roadway safety is less certain.

Finally, it is important to recognize that automated enforcement programs remain controversial across the United States. Several jurisdictions have discontinued similar programs following legal challenges, public opposition, and policy concerns. For example:

- **Texas** enacted a statewide ban on red-light camera programs in 2019.
- **Arizona** discontinued its statewide speed camera program in 2010 following strong public opposition.
- **New Jersey** allowed its red-light camera pilot program to expire in 2014 after legislators raised concerns about fairness and effectiveness.
- Courts in **Missouri** struck down several automated ticketing programs due to due process concerns involving citations issued to vehicle owners rather than drivers.
- Several cities in **California**, including Los Angeles, ended their red-light camera programs due to operational concerns and declining public support.

These examples demonstrate that automated enforcement programs are far from universally accepted and often face significant legal and public trust challenges.

If the Legislature's goal is to improve roadway safety, there are alternative approaches that may provide meaningful results without expanding automated surveillance systems. These include roadway engineering improvements, traffic calming infrastructure, targeted enforcement in high-risk corridors, improved signage and lighting, and driver safety education programs.

Before expanding funding for automated enforcement, the Legislature should require clear evidence that the program produces measurable statewide safety improvements, protects due process rights, maintains strict limits on data collection and surveillance, and avoids creating financial incentives tied to citation volume.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask to not pass HB1166 HD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Tamara McKay