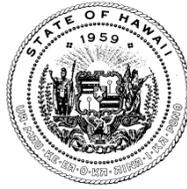


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
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Thursday, February 12, 2026
8:30 AM
State Capitol, 430

**HB2516
RELATING TO HELMETS**

House Committee on Transportation

The Department of Transportation (DOT) is in strong support of House Bill 2516, which increases the age requirement for wearing helmets while operating electric foot scooters and bicycles from 16 to 18 years, and mandates helmet use for all riders of high-speed electric bicycles, regardless of age.

DOT respectfully asks that HB 2516 be amended in the following two critical ways to ensure alignment with existing work in the current session to improve safety standards among diverse and emerging modes:

We recommend the Committee adopt language from HB 2021 in regard to the definition of electric bicycles by replacing the term "high-speed electric bicycle" with "low-speed electric bicycle" in HB 2516, and ensure consistent terminology across statutes regulating e-bikes, and other electric modes reduce confusion for law enforcement, manufacturers, and users.

Additionally, we recommend the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) – U.S., and Snell Memorial Foundation be the recognized industry standard for bicycle helmets International equivalent standards.

We believe that this bill will not only reduce the risk of head injuries but also raise awareness about the importance of helmet use among riders of all ages. By updating rental regulations to reflect these new requirements, we ensure consistent application of safety standards across both privately owned and rented vehicles.

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



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
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Testimony in SUPPORT of (HB2516)
RELATING TO HELMETS

REPRESENTATIVE DARIUS KILA, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Thursday, February 12, 2026 at 8:30 AM | Room Number: 430

1 **Fiscal Implications:** None

2 **Department Position:** The Department of Health (“Department”) supports this measure and
3 respectfully offers the following comments.

4 **Department Testimony:** The Emergency Medical Services & Injury Prevention System Branch
5 (EMSIPSB) provides this testimony on behalf of the Department in support.

6 Helmet use is a proven, effective strategy to reduce traumatic brain injuries and fatalities. E-
7 bike and electric scooter-related injuries represent a growing and preventable public safety
8 concern in Hawaii. Between January 1, 2022 and February 3, 2026, Hawaii’s 911 Emergency
9 Medical Services responded to 765 e-bike related injuries statewide, with 234 involving children
10 and adolescents between the ages of 4 and 18. These numbers underscore the urgent need for
11 stronger safety measures.

12 The number of e-bike related injuries has risen steadily each year:

- 13 - 106 injuries in 2022
- 14 - 165 injuries in 2023
- 15 - 227 injuries in 2024

- 1 - 244 injuries in 2025
- 2 - 23 injuries in 2026 as of February 3, 2026

3 Overall, this reflects a 130.2% increase in e-bike related injuries since 2022. These sustained
4 increases are particularly concerning given the number of incidents involving school-aged
5 riders.

6 In addition to overall injury trends, the severity of these incidents is notable. Between January
7 1, 2022 and February 3, 2026, 911 Emergency Medical Services transported nearly 300 patients
8 with traumatic brain injuries, many of which are preventable through early education, helmet
9 use, and safer riding practices.

10 EMSIPSB supports the implementation of strengthened helmet requirements for electric foot
11 scooters, bicycles, and high-speed electric bicycles as outlined in this measure. This proactive
12 approach aligns with injury prevention best practices and helps safeguard the health and safety
13 of Hawaii's keiki and all residents who use these modes of transportation.

14 For these reasons, we respectfully supports this measure.

15 **Offered Amendments:** None

16 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



February 12, 2026

Representative Darius Kila, Chair
Representative Tyson Miyake, Vice-Chair
Members of the House Committee on Transportation

Re: HB 2526 Helmets; Electric Foot Scooter; Bicycle; High-Speed Electric Bicycle; Required

AAA Hawai'i is pleased to support HB 2516 (Miyake), which would raise the minimum age at which a person is legally required to wear a helmet when operating electric scooters (e-scooters) and bicycles from under age 16 to under age 18. The bill would also require helmet use for riders of all ages operating a high-speed electric bicycle (Class 3).

However, the bill does not explicitly state that the helmet requirement for minors applies to low-speed electric bicycles (Class 1 and Class 2). Clarifying this point would strengthen the measure and ensure consistent protection for young riders across all e-bike classes.

AAA policy encourages helmet use by all micromobility users and supports laws that mandate helmet use for individuals under age 18. Children and teens account for a disproportionately high share of micromobility injuries. According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, youth represent roughly one-third of all micromobility injuries. A 2023 study published in the American Academy of Pediatrics found that emergency department visits for e-scooter injuries among minors increased 71 percent between 2020 and 2021. The head was the most frequently injured body region, and among those with head injuries, nearly 67 percent were not wearing a helmet at the time of the crash.

The safety risks are also significant for e-bike riders of all ages. We support the requirement that all high-speed (Class 3) e-bike riders wear helmets and recommend clarifying that the helmet requirement also applies to minors operating low-speed (Class 1 and 2) e-bikes. Even at a maximum speed of 20 mph, low-speed e-bikes travel fast enough to reduce reaction time and increase crash severity—risks that are amplified for children. A 2023 National Institutes of Health study found that riders ages 2 to 18 involved in e-bike crashes had 2.4 times greater odds of severe injury compared to those in conventional bicycle crashes. HB 2516 should reflect this data by clearly extending helmet protections to minors on low-speed e-bikes.

AAA Hawai'i was founded in Honolulu in 1915 and is a longstanding advocate for traffic safety. With more than 170,000 members in Hawai'i and 60 million nationwide, the safety of our members and all road users remain our core mission. While helmets cannot prevent crashes, they are a critical last line of defense against serious head trauma. From seat belts to helmets, protective equipment saves lives.

AAA Hawai'i appreciates the Legislature's commitment to improving roadway safety and supports the objectives of HB 2516. With clarification regarding low-speed e-bikes, this bill will provide stronger, more consistent protection for all Hawai'i's riders.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Marianne Kim'.

Marianne Kim
Senior Public Policy Specialist



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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
Thursday - February 12, 2026 - 8:30am

Hawai'i Bicycling League Supports HB 2516, Relating to Helmets

Aloha Chair Kila, Vice Chair Miyake, and members of the Committee,

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.

HBL supports HB 2516 to amend Hawai'i Statute §291C-139 and 291C-150 to establish minimum age requirements for operating electric foot scooters and helmet use requirements. These updated regulations align with the work of this committee to improve safety, and update standards so that more people can access affordable transportation options. This benefits everyone.

Given that 2025 was one of the deadliest years in decades on Hawai'i roads, it is imperative to take bold action to influence public behavior change and raise awareness about road safety for all road users, especially vulnerable users, including keiki. This is aligned with Complete Street principles which have been adopted by the State and the Counties.

HBL urges you to support this bill and help leverage the economic, health and environmental benefits it presents so that individuals and families can be better supported in their active transportation. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

S/Eduardo Hernandez

Eduardo Hernandez
Advocacy Director
Hawai'i Bicycling League