



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

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**ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:**

S.B. NO. 2697, S.D. 1, RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION.

**BEFORE THE:**

SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

**DATE:** Tuesday, March 3, 2026

**TIME:** 10:15 a.m.

**LOCATION:** State Capitol, Room 016

**TESTIFIER(S):** **WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY.**

(For more information, contact Michael J.S. Moriyama,  
Deputy Attorney General, at 808-587-2979)

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Chair Rhoads 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, authorizes the Department of Transportation and county police departments to impound vehicles with expired registrations of three or more years, proposes to set penalties for owners who fail to register motor vehicles brought into Hawaii from out of the State, and increases the penalties for the unlawful use of high-occupancy vehicle lanes.

Section 2 of the bill, on page 3, line 13, through page 4, line 5, which addresses the penalty for vehicle registration violations, amends section 286-61, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), by specifying that an owner of an out-of-state motor vehicle brought into the State who fails to register the out-of-state vehicle pursuant to section 286-41, 286-50, or 286-54, HRS, shall be fined a penalty (ranging in amounts to be determined).

The Department is concerned that an "out-of-state" motor vehicle is not defined and creates a new, but unspecified, registration category of motor vehicles. Section 286-41(a), HRS, already requires an owner of **any** motor vehicle, including a motor vehicle brought into the State, that is to be operated on public roadways to register the motor vehicle in the county where the motor vehicle is to be operated.

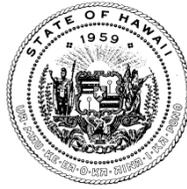
The Department recommends that section 286-61, HRS, on page 3, line 13, through page 4, line 5, be amended to read as follows (stricken material to be deleted from the bill indicated in bold):

**"§286-61 Penalty.** Any person who violates sections 286-41, 286-42, 286-44.5 to 286-56.5, and 286-58 to 286-60 shall be fined not less than \$5 nor more than \$1,000; provided that any corporate owner of a motor vehicle who fails to register a motor vehicle as required by section 286-41(a) following a transfer of the vehicle between counties shall be fined \$1,000 for each violation[-]; provided further that any owner of ~~[an out-of-state]~~ a motor vehicle brought into the State who fails to register the ~~[out-of-state]~~ motor vehicle pursuant to section 286-41, 286-50, or 286-54 shall be fined not less than \$ \_\_\_\_\_ and not more than \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for each violation. Any person who violates section 286-43, 286-44, or 286-57 shall be fined not less than \$5 and not more than \$1,000 or imprisoned not more than one year, or both."

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

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

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



EDWIN H. SNIFFEN  
DIRECTOR  
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

Deputy Directors  
Nā Hope Luna Ho'okele  
DREANALEE K. KALILI  
TAMMY L. LEE  
CURT T. OTAGURO  
ROBIN K. SHISHIDO

**STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I**  
**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION | KA 'OIHANA ALAKAU**  
869 PUNCHBOWL STREET  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-5097

Tuesday, March 3, 2026  
10:15 AM  
State Capitol, 016

**SB2697,SD1**  
**RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION**

Senate Committee on Judiciary

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The Department of Transportation (DOT) supports S.B. 2697, S.D.1, relating to transportation.

This bill addresses several critical issues in traffic safety and vehicle compliance. It prohibits driving on shoulder lanes except under specified conditions, which will help maintain the integrity of these lanes for emergency use and improve overall traffic flow. The bill also authorizes the impoundment and seizure of vehicles with expired registrations exceeding three and five years respectively, which will encourage timely registration and ensure that vehicles on our roads meet current safety and emissions standards.

The DOT particularly supports the increased fines for out-of-state vehicle registration violations. This measure will help ensure that all vehicles operating on Hawaii's roads are properly registered and compliant with state laws, contributing to fair enforcement and increased safety for all road users.

The establishment of penalties for HOV lane violations is another crucial aspect of this bill. HOV lanes are designed to encourage carpooling and reduce traffic congestion. Strengthening enforcement of these lanes will help maintain their effectiveness and encourage more drivers to participate in ride-sharing.

Overall, S.B. 2697, S.D. 1 aligns with the DOT's mission to enhance road safety, improve traffic management, and ensure compliance with vehicle regulations. These measures will contribute to a safer and more efficient transportation system for all Hawaii residents and visitors.

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

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

RICK BLANGIARDI  
MAYOR  
MEIA

ADMINISTRATION  
925 DILLINGHAM BOULEVARD, SUITE 257 • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96817  
PHONE: (808) 768-3392 • FAX: (808) 768-3750 • WEBSITE: honolulu.gov

KIMBERLY M. HASHIRO  
DIRECTOR  
PO'O

MEGAN JOHNSON  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
HOPE PO'O



February 27, 2026

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair  
The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair  
and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary  
State Capitol, Conference Room 016  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

SUBJECT: S.B. No. 2697, S.D. 1 - Relating To Transportation  
HEARING: Tuesday, March 3, 2026, 10:15 a.m.

The City and County of Honolulu, Department of Customer Services (CSD) respectfully offers **comments** to S.B. No. 2697, S.D. 1 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.

S.B. No. 2697, S.D. 1 addresses several transportation-related matters, including shoulder lane use, enforcement actions for vehicles with long-expired registrations, penalties for failure to register out-of-state vehicles, and revised penalties for certain traffic violations. CSD's comments are limited to provisions affecting the administration of motor vehicle registration.

The provisions authorizing the Department of Transportation and county police departments to impound or cause to tow vehicles that are not currently registered and have not been registered for the three previous consecutive years or more will require

careful coordination among all enforcement agencies and county motor vehicle registration offices.

Implementation will require updates to registration databases and internal procedures to ensure accurate verification of registration status, proper calculation of updated registration fees and penalties, and timely processing of redemptions. Clear communication protocols between enforcement agencies and DMV offices will be essential to ensure that vehicle records accurately reflect impoundment and towing actions.

In addition, statutory clarity regarding notice requirements, redemption timelines, documentation standards, and fee assessments will be critical to ensure consistent application across all counties and to minimize disputes between vehicle owners, law enforcement agencies, and towing operators. Existing procedures and contractual arrangements may require review and modification to align with any new statutory authority.

Given these significant operational 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, CSD appreciates the opportunity to provide **comments** on S.B. No. 2697, S.D. 1.

Sincerely,

*for* Kimberly M. Hashiro  
Director

**SB-2697-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2026 6:32:26 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/3/2026 10:15:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, STRONGLY SUPPORT

ENFORCEMENT 291-C WAI'ANAE VALLEY HOMESTEAD, ETC.

291-C INCREASE PENALTY FROM \$500-\$1000

2697 SB RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION.

Law Office of Georgette A. Yaindl, LLLC  
Georgette Anne Yaindl 8940  
P.O. Box 307  
Kailua-Kona Hawai`i 96745-0307  
(808) 224-0219 v/txt (877) 300-8869 fax  
gyaindl@gyattorney.com

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March 1, 2026

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair  
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair  
Committee on Judiciary  
The Senate  
33<sup>rd</sup> Legislature, State of Hawai`i

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

Dear Committee leadership and members,

Re: **COMMENTS ON SB2697, SD1 RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION**

DATE: Tuesday, March 3, 2026  
TIME: 10:15 a.m.  
PLACE: Conference Room 016 & Videoconference  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

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

Section 1 “Shoulder lanes; use prohibited” would prohibit “vehicles” from being driven on the shoulder, and offenders would be subject to a fine. However, “‘Vehicle’ is defined in Chapter 291C as “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. Unfortunately, transportation by bicycle often requires use of the shoulders. Accordingly, it is right that “vehicle” is defined as excluding bicycles.

The Senate Committee on Transportation made 12 substantive changes to the original draft of this bill, three of which seriously undermine its intent or removing derelict vehicles. The Transportation Committee reports:

Your Committee further finds that abandoned and derelict vehicles clutter the State's roadways and create unsafe road conditions. While these vehicles often have registrations that have been expired for three or more years, the Department of Transportation does not currently possess the authority to impound and dispose of these vehicles. Additionally, many road users who own out-of-state vehicles often fail to register

their vehicles in the State and therefore do not contribute to the collective maintenance of the State's road infrastructure. Your Committee also finds that authorizing the Department of Transportation to impound and dispose of certain vehicles will contribute to safer roadways. Imposing harsher fines on road users and owners of out-of-state vehicles would deter misuse of the State's roads and encourage compliance with state vehicle registration requirements. This measure will contribute to safer, more efficient roadways and improved traffic management across the State.

Notwithstanding, the Committee amended the original draft to delete language (1) that authorizes the Department of Transportation to impound a vehicle parked in certain locations with an expired registration of three years or more; (2) that holds the owner of an impounded vehicle liable for the penalties incurred, cost of storage, and other charges incident to the impoundment of the vehicle; and (3) that authorizes the Department of Transportation and county police departments to impound a vehicle parked in certain locations with an expired registration of five years or more and dispose of the vehicle by public auction.

Having otherwise provided in SD1 for appropriate protections for identifiable owners of such derelict vehicles, there is no justification for deleting the foregoing provisions. It is right and appropriate that this Honorable committee put them back in.

Please also reconsider the language in subsection (d) to the newly proposed “§291C-Expired registration” statute that provides: “The department of transportation and the county police departments may establish rules as necessary for the enforcement of this section.” 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