



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII'
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION | KA 'OIHANA ALAKAU
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SB2954
RELATING TO TRAFFIC SAFETY

Senate Committee on Transportation

The Hawaii Department of Transportation (HDOT) submits comments on SB 2954 which requires the HDOT to complete and publish a traffic engineering study before installing specified traffic safety devices or changing posted speed limits on state highways. The bill also mandates the establishment of a publicly accessible dashboard for requests, studies, decisions, and public comments, as well as annual reporting to the Legislature.

HDOT already conducts thorough traffic engineering studies before implementing significant changes to our highway systems, including the installation of traffic safety devices and alterations to speed limits. These studies are essential to ensure that any changes are based on sound engineering principles and data-driven decision-making processes.

HDOT currently demonstrates a strong commitment to transparency through a variety of publicly accessible tools and resources. These include:

- The Highways Program Status Map, which provides detailed information on current and upcoming state highway projects (scheduled to begin within the next two years), along with Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) counts, pavement conditions, and other program data.
- Weekly updates on statewide traffic fatalities by county, published on the Safe Communities page to promote awareness and safety.
- Online access to community presentations and project details for planned initiatives.
- Email subscription services through HDOT Notices, enabling residents to receive timely updates on roadwork, public notices, and developments across highways, airports, and harbors.
- Additional platforms such as the Hawaii Transportation Safety Analytics tool (developed in partnership with Google Cloud and CARTO), which supports data-driven insights into safety and infrastructure.

In addition, our planning and project delivery processes include opportunities for public involvement, and representatives from HDOT attend neighborhood board meetings to provide updates and receive feedback.

SB 2954 overlaps, and in some instances conflicts with, Section 291C-107 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), which requires HDOT or a county to consider an engineering study when setting a maximum speed limit except within one mile of a school and ten miles per hour of the current speed limit. Section 291C-107 HRS also defines an engineering study and specifies what factors HDOT or counties must consider in an engineering study.

While we understand the overall goals of this legislation, we would like to work with the Legislature to ensure that the implementation of the requested requirements does not create undue administrative burdens or delay critical safety improvements.

Additionally, we recommend that the Legislature consider providing additional resources to support the development and maintenance of the proposals and to accommodate the increased workload associated with more frequent reporting and public engagement.

The HDOT is committed to improving traffic safety on our state highways and welcomes opportunities to enhance our communication with the public. We look forward to working with the Legislature to refine this bill in a manner that achieves its intended goals while maintaining our ability to respond efficiently to traffic safety needs.

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