



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
869 PUNCHBOWL STREET  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-5097

March 23, 2009

TESTIMONY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

SENATE BILL NO. 295 S.D. 1

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

The purpose of Senate Bill 295 is to allow use of high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes regardless of occupancy levels, which would serve as a no-cost incentive to encourage the purchase of electric vehicles.

**The Department supports the bill and offers the following comments.**

1. Current federal regulations under SAFETEA-LU do not allow such vehicles without occupancy requirements to use HOV facilities after September 30, 2009 for federal-aid highways (23USC166). We are unsure whether the new federal regulation will provide for an extension.
2. If these vehicles are allowed to use HOV facilities without occupancy requirements, the DOT is required to monitor these facilities and annually certify that the performance of the facility is not degraded and operated in accordance with federal requirements. This annual certification includes maintaining a "degraded" facility level of operations of 45 mph for our freeways and not more than 10 mph below the speed limit for our other highways. Degraded facility levels of more than the above would require discontinuation of allowing energy-efficient vehicles to use HOV lanes in accordance with federal regulations (23USC166, Section 1121).

Testimony before the House Committee on  
Transportation

S.B. 295 SD1, Relating to Transportation

Monday, March 23, 2009  
9:00 a.m., Conference Room 309

By Carlos Perez Loriga  
Director  
Customer Technology Applications Division  
Hawaiian Electric Company, Inc.

Chair Souki, Vice Chair Awana, and members of the Committee:

My name is Carlos Perez Loriga and I am testifying on behalf of Hawaiian Electric Company, Inc., and its subsidiary utilities, Maui Electric Company, Ltd., and Hawaii Electric Light Company, Inc.

S. B. 295 SD1 proposes to allow hybrid, plug-in hybrid, and other energy-efficient vehicles to utilize high occupancy vehicle lanes regardless of the number of passengers in the vehicle.

Hawaiian Electric Company strongly supports S.B. 295 SD1, to promote the increased use of fuel efficient hybrid and plug-in hybrid vehicles. Increased consumer acceptance of energy-efficient vehicles, including plug-in hybrid electric vehicles, will aid in the reduction of greenhouse emissions and fossil fuel use and will help enable the Hawaii Clean Energy Initiative's goal of 70% clean, renewable energy by 2030.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.