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February 4, 2017

The Honorable Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair
and members of the Committee on Transportation and Energy
The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair
and members of the Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs
The Senate
State Capitol
Honolulu, HI

Dear Senators Inouye and Nishihara and members of the Committees:

Subject: SB 221 (relating to highway safety – photo red light imaging detection systems)

I encourage your support of SB221, for all the reasons stated in Section 1 of the bill.

I am a regular bicyclist. I witness on a daily basis a number of motor vehicle red light runners. No longer is it sufficient to wait at an intersection for a red light to turn green before proceeding. Now, you must look in both directions after the light in your direction has turned green to make sure no crazy driver is speeding through a red light and may hit you. o

I suggest for early installation photo red light imaging detection systems at the intersections of Lunalilo and Pensacola Streets and St. Louis Drive and Waialae Avenue.

Enacting this bill would make the roads safer for bicyclists, pedestrians, and motorists.

Mahalo for your consideration.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 3, 2017 3:36 PM
To: TRE Testimony
Cc: mendezj@hawaii.edu
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB221 on Feb 6, 2017 15:00PM*

SB221

Submitted on: 2/3/2017

Testimony for TRE/PSM on Feb 6, 2017 15:00PM in Conference Room 225

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Javier Mendez-Alvarez	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND ENERGY

Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair

and

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL
and MILITARY AFFAIRS

Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair
Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

Re: Senate Bill No. 221 -- Relating to Highway Safety

Monday, February 6, 2017
Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 225
3:00 p.m.

HONORABLE CHAIRS, HONORABLE VICE CHAIRS, AND MEMBERS OF THE
COMMITTEES:

My name is Milton Imada. Before I begin, I would like to say that I am not against pedestrian safety. I am here to point out the flaws in the traffic camera bill, as I see it. I am a registered voter with a 34-year background in fleet maintenance and safety who also maintains a commercial driver's license.

On behalf of other commercial drivers and myself we ask you not to spend our hard earned tax dollars on any form of traffic cameras that citizens rejected in 2002.

This proposed photo red light camera system is flawed, biased, discriminatory and contradicts the "safety" purpose of this Bill. I'm sure government today can design other means of acquiring funds to pay for rail without imposing additional stress looking for the eye on a pole. Isn't our overcrowded roads enough stress for your constituents?

ENTRAPMENT:

Commercial drivers will be this Bill's most common victims because the inadequate timing of yellow lights fails to allow enough time for all lengths of commercial vehicles and buses entering the intersections on the yellow lights to pass the photo sensors and safely exit the intersections under all conditions of

traffic without being cited. The size, weight, load and length of commercial vehicles and busses require much more space in front to come to a safe stop. Busses will be the cameras' most common victims because bus drivers cannot stop in a short distance for fear of passenger injuries; passengers are standing and don't have seat belts, therefore, bus drivers are committed to pass through the intersection knowing they will become a victim of a questionable camera system.

Currently there isn't a problem because a vehicle entering an intersection on the yellow light is allowed to exit without being cited in spite of the vehicle's rear end still over the entry side of the intersection. This will all change with the passage of Senate Bill No 221. Supporters of this Bill will be knowingly and deliberately trapping these unsung heroes of State commerce, forcing them to receive undeserving costly red light citations with the treat of incarceration and increasing insurance premiums that will threaten their livelihoods.

DISCRIMINATION AND SAFETY CONTRADICTION:

The intersection stoplight photo imaging system this Bill imposes is bias and unjustly discriminates against car, bus and truck drivers because it fails to provide an effective way to read the tiny motorcycle license plates under all weather conditions. If "safety" is the true intention of this Bill, then this Committee must be consistent and apply it to mopeds.

This Bill's flawed intersection red light camera system is an overkill designed to prey on Oahu drivers to extort moneys to feed government's depleted General Fund and feed the most costly rail system in the Nation.

How many fatalities is actually the fault of drivers running the red light at intersections? The public needs to know the truth not misleading exaggerated "smoke and mirrors" to impose bad law at the expense of Oahu's citizens. Where are the exact statistics of intersection accidents that were truly the fault of a responsible driver and not caused by drivers under drug and alcohol abuse and irresponsible pedestrians?

EXPLANATION:

This Bill tries to gain emotional support and confuse citizens into thinking the offenses of running the red lights at intersections are related to

news reports that commonly describe hit-and-run drivers who run over small children or the elderly, when in fact news reports prove pedestrian casualties are happening outside the intersections and in too many cases outside the crosswalks when pedestrians jaywalk. Pedestrians ignore the countdown stop-crossing signal for pedestrians at intersection. Doesn't the countless illegal pedestrian intersection crossing citations in 2016 enough to prove me right?

Pedestrians crossing in crosswalks also cause accidents when they fail to look out for vehicles like drivers have to look out for them.

Too many pedestrians are ignorant of the law or believe, by law, they always have the right of way no matter what. Their carelessness place themselves and drivers in harms way and is a formula for disaster. Regardless, the system always blames the driver.

Contrary to this Bill, red light cameras were not found to be beneficial in all jurisdictions in the United States. Many counties have abandoned the cameras, which increased rear end accidents at intersections.

An August 2, 2011 Star-Advertiser article stated the Houston City Council voted to end its intersection camera program in spite of paying a \$25 million dollars contract penalty. This article also stated "more than a dozen cities now ban the cameras, as do nine states. In many areas where the cameras have been turned off, opponents argue that the programs simply generated revenue without improving safety. Others said they were a money train -- Los Angeles' City Council canceled its program because it was losing money, which some argue the cameras were an invasion of privacy."

Be forewarned that this Bill will increase rear end collisions at intersections. Large trucks may loose their loads and fishtail into other vehicles when drivers panic stop in fear and paranoia of photo cameras. On November 15, 2016 a cement truck overturned while trying to beat the stop light and turn at an intersection on Sand Island Road.

Hawaii drivers do not drive like drivers in other jurisdictions; therefore, do not deserve to be treated in the same manner. We want to keep Hawaii a very special place without becoming photo targets and unwilling benefactors.

Public beware this Bill is not a means to an end but will open a Pandora's box with growing negativity infringing on our rights to privacy and lead Hawaii down a dangerous path of eroding civil liberties.

If you truly want to make a positive difference in the eyes of drivers, develop law to encourage the City to provide for additional police officers made up of paid reserve officers who can once again maintain a meaningful presence on our highways and at intersections. Police presence fosters a mind sticking law-abiding consciousness that will never be achieved with cameras.

Police officers can enforce immediate driver and vehicle laws that cameras cannot. Officers can immediately detect if the actions of drivers are due to alcohol or drug influence with unlawful contraband.

Government will solve nothing by squandering our hard earned monies on this unpopular project that will meaningfully increase the stresses of today's drivers who are already on edge trying to cope with Oahu's increasingly overcrowded roadways.

Kudos for amending this Bill, applying it to all counties with motor vehicles, not only those counties with populations in excess of 600,000 that are most profitable for the government agency imposing the cameras. After all, driving safely applies to all people on all islands.

SUGGESTIONS -- Alternatives rather than imposing this Bill:

- (1) Increase timing of yellow lights no less than ten (10) seconds to allow all lengths of commercial vehicles to safely pass through intersections under all conditions of traffic. This may be the solution to all our intersection woes without the use of cameras.
- (2) Today, the public is accustomed to the law whereby no red light citation issued if a vehicle enters the intersection on the yellow light. To provide a camera system more acceptable and specifically targeting the red light runner, remove all sensors within the intersection, maintain only the sensor at the inside edge of the crosswalk.
- (3) Kudos for finally accepting the fact that mopeds are also motor vehicles with the moped and driver treated somewhat like motorcycle operators. The only flaw is the lack of driver insurance requirement. Now mopeds hit you and get away free by saying "I no have money and insurance."

We look forward to your Aloha and support.