



Senator J. Kalani English, Chair
Senate Committee on Transportation, International
& Intergovernmental Affairs

Monday, February 2, 2009
1:15 p.m., Conference Room 224

RE: SB 281 – Relating to the Statewide Traffic Code

Chair English, Vice-Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee:

Segway Inc., the global leader in developing advanced electric propulsion technologies including the Segway Personal Transporter (PT), supports Senate Bill 281 – Relating to the Statewide Traffic Code.

The Segway PT was introduced in 2001 and shortly thereafter, a vast majority of states, including Hawaii, passed legislation defining the device as an Electric Personal Assistive Mobility Device or EPAMD. To date, tens of thousands of devices have been sold into the commercial and consumer marketplaces. Just over 1,000 law enforcement agencies worldwide deploy Segway PTs and a recent evaluation by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) declared the Segway PT to be “one of the best community policing tools”. In everyday life, the Segway PT is rapidly becoming a significant transportation option for individuals who prefer a highly efficient, safe and zero emissions vehicle to offset escalating gas prices and reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

The device, which is manufactured in the United States, is engineered with safety as the highest priority. Undergoing intensive testing prior to leaving the manufacturing plant, the Segway PT has been tested by four independent safety agencies, including the U.S. Department of Transportation, and all have concluded the device to be safe, stable and extremely maneuverable and appropriate for non-motorized pathways. Sold only and directly through authorized dealers, including one in Honolulu, the Segway PT is only placed in the hands of a user once that person undergoes product orientation and training. This commitment to safety clearly distinguishes the company and its products from all other two and three wheeled motorized devices.

The current Hawaii EPAMD law restricts usage of the device primarily to sidewalks at a speed not to exceed 8 mph. SB 281 seeks to amend the current law by adding a local government control option. Segway Inc. agrees that local governments should have a say in when and where an EPAMD is operated. However, we respectfully request that any further regulation imposed on EPAMD use would be based upon actual issues which have arisen with the Segway PT itself and not other “like” devices.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Matthew J. Dailida
Director, Government Affairs
Segway Inc.

January 30, 2009

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION, INTERNATIONAL AND
INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Twenty-Fifth Legislative Regular Session
Senator Kalani English and Committee Members

Aloha Senator English

Testimony in support of SB281.

This letter is written as personal testimony and it has not been voted on at the Waikiki Neighborhood Board.

Over the past year the Waikiki Neighborhood Board has had several complaints/concerns over the operation of Segways and other electric vehicles on Waikiki Sidewalks. The major concern is on the already heavily congested Kalakaua Avenue sidewalk. I have heard concerns about people almost getting run over and have personally observed an individual Electric Vehicle operating in what appears to be a reckless manner on a Kuhio Avenue Sidewalk.

I have personally seen Segway tour groups that are escorted and are absolutely polite and careful to operate in a safe manner. Our electric vehicle operators have invested in our economy and I assume are employing people and paying taxes and the provisions of SB281 would allow them to continue to operate.

The proposed change to SB281 would give the Counties the ability to designate areas of operation for these vehicles. I assume the Counties would add provisions for handicapped persons and security vehicles but that would be for the Counties to determine.

Mahalo for your consideration of SB281 and I will recommend to the Waikiki Neighborhood Board that we consider a motion on this matter at our next meeting.

Sincerely,

---signed---

Robert J Finley