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Item 2, Bill 9

To: Breene Harimoto, Chair

City Council Transportation Committee
2nd floor meeting room 205
1:00 PM
Honolulu Hale
530 S. King Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Thursday, March 28, 2013

Aloha Chair Harimoto and Council Members,

My name is Donald Sakamoto and I am the Chairman for Citizens For a Fair ADA Ride (CFADAR), and this is my written testimony. I am in SUPPORT of Bill 9 (2013) Ordinance for a number of reasons, which I will explain to you all in this written testimony.

I advocate for riders of The Bus and The Handi-van. My group and I are consumers who use Public Transportation. Our group, the Citizens for a Fair Americans With Disabilities Act Ride (CFADAR) has been in existence for more than 8 years. Many riders are still experiencing the same problems identified at our first meeting. Late pick-ups and drop-offs, especially for Chemo and dialysis patients who require timely medical appointments, are inexcusable! They often wait in harsh weather conditions; feeling tired or ill. Not having a place to sit and wait for the van can be overwhelming after treatment.

Our group understands that The Handi-van provides a "shared" ride, but I think that we deserve a FAIR shared ride. The long waiting times, long circuitous routes, missed appointments are truly frustrating and tiresome too!

We often, get responses like "We're looking into it," or "We're working on it" only to find out that nothing has been done. In truth, we discover that nothing was looked into and no one has worked on anything. No solutions have been proposed! The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed in the early 1990's. However, it seems that the same issues remain now, according to long time riders. The passing of the ADA needs to have more meaning for the consumers. We do meet with Oahu Transit Services (OTS) on a quarterly schedule, but we are still bringing up the same concerns we brought up in 2005!

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We definitely need a clear timeline where we can expect that our concerns will be addressed and hopefully resolved. When can we expect results?

On March 1 & August 30, 2012 some of our members and I were able to submit written and oral testimony to your City Council Transportation Committee Meeting. We did bring up a lot of problems on those days and we asked the council members for their assistance in resolving the ongoing issues with The Handi-van services. Since our testimonies, we continue to receive complaints from our members & other passengers.

Some concerns are:

- Drivers who report to work & have to wait for a van because there are no vans available
- Large amounts of broken Handi-vans sitting in their parking stalls at 611 Middle Street waiting to be repaired
- Handi-van fleet reduced from 166 vans to 160
- Passengers with walkers being picked up with vans that have broken lifts
- Scheduling issue of stacking or tying two routes with one van, which causes many of these passengers to arrive to their destinations very late (some 3 hours or longer)
- The Trapeze software not working efficiently, which causes the disruption with the scheduling of the vans

As you can see there are still ongoing issues with the operations of Oahu Transit Services (OTS). I believe Bill 9 (2013) will allow a chance to bring in newer TECHNOLOGY, for more EFFICIENT or possibly even REDUCE OVERALL working costs.

Also, competition brings forth an increase in EFFICIENCY, MODERNIZATION, and CREATIVITY to the FORFRONT With OUT "competition", it creates a lack that wastes time, manpower, supplies, and therefore overall = waste of MONEY. Renewal of contracts brings new ENERGY and removes a feeling of "Staleness" – it generates a CONSTANT CREATVITY and new IDEAS to make it work BETTER, again more efficient, less waste better costs, and being mor productive. It removes COMPLACENCY – Everyone involved MUST retain an attitude of MOTIVATION to GET THINGS DONE, otherwise the possibility of NOT having the contract again with the company or in this case the City.

THE only things that I would like to see changed in the bill is having the City incorporate its own yearly audit of OTS, instead of waiting every 3 years for the Federal Transportation Administration (FTA) audit, the TERMINATION of the contract BEING (5) YEARS, and not "open ended" as it is now.

Finally, I would like to express my thanks to Council woman Ann Kobayashi for introducing this bill, and I really hope that the rest of the Council Memvrs will embrace the bill, and to have it eventually passed.

Mahalo,

Donald Sakamoto
Chairman Citizens For a Fair ADA Ride (CFADAR)