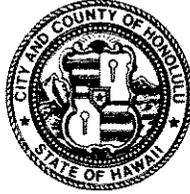


POLICE DEPARTMENT
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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MAYOR



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KARL A. GODSEY
DEPUTY CHIEFS

OUR REFERENCE TTN-LC

March 18, 2009

The Honorable Todd K. Apo, Chair
and Members
Honolulu City Council
530 South King Street, Room 202
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RECEIVED

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HONOLULU, HAWAII

Dear Chair Apo and Councilmembers:

Subject: Bill 4, CD 1 (2009), Relating to the Use of Electronic Devices While Operating Motor Vehicles

I am Major Thomas Nitta of the Traffic Division, Honolulu Police Department (HPD), City and County of Honolulu.

The HPD strongly supports Bill 4, CD 1 (2009), Relating to the Use of Electronic Devices While Operating Motor Vehicles. This bill addresses the safety issue of dividing the driver's attention while operating a motor vehicle with the use of electronic devices such as cellular phones, personal data assistants, video games, texting devices, and the myriad uses of these devices.

The HPD feels that Bill 4, CD 1 (2009), is a positive approach to the growing trend of society wanting to be connected or entertained. The safe operation of a motor vehicle is the primary duty of the driver, who should not be distracted or have his attention divided by these devices. This is a safety issue for all users of our roadways, drivers, passengers, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

A Harvard Center of Risk Analysis study has estimated that six percent of all crashes are caused by cell phones, equating to 636,000 crashes, 330,000 injuries, 12,000 serious injuries, and 2,600 deaths each year. Currently, an estimated 100 million people use cell phones while driving. Compounded with the growing use trend of other electronic devices such as texting, PDAs, and video games, it is reasonable to assume that driver distraction, which accounts for 80 percent of collisions, will rise.

The Honorable Todd K. Apo, Chair
and Members
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The intent of this bill does not prohibit the use of a hands free device, nor factory installed devices. This bill includes an exception for emergency responders utilizing such equipment within the scope of their duties, nor would the use of two-way radios in the course of an operator's duties be opposed.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

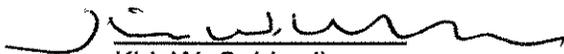
Sincerely,



Thomas T. Nitta, Major
Traffic Division

APPROVED:

APPROVED:



Kirk W. Caldwell
Managing Director

for: 
Boisse P. Correa
Chief of Police