

CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
June 10, 2009

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CITY CLERK  
HONOLULU, HAWAII

**Subject Bill 16**

Chairman and Members of the Council, good morning,

My name is Ursula Retherford and I testify against Bill 16. I believe it is imprudent and irresponsible to segment the proposed rail route and plan to build the 6.5 mile section from Kapolei to Waipahu without the assurance of federal funds. To take the risk that we may end up paying locally for the one billion+, and many billions more if we also jeopardize federal funding for the rest of the project, is fiscally irresponsible and unconscionable. This is **my** money, and that of all other taxpayers, that you are gambling with. I am not a gambler and neither should you be, especially not with other people's money.

For those of you who use the excuse to vote for this bill because you made campaign promises to support rail, or that voters said yes to rail in November, this is not about killing rail, although given the financial realities it should be killed. This is about honoring the trust of those who voted yes, their trust that you would move ahead responsibly, and avoid exposing taxpayers to unacceptable, unaffordable financial risks.

The excuse that we might lose federal funds if we don't show our resolve to the feds by starting the project soon, is outright disingenuous. The feds, especially given the scarcity and fierce competition for funds for the maintenance of older transit systems, might just as likely conclude that ignoring their requirements for funding is a sign that we don't need their help at all.

The other excuse, that if we don't hurry up and use the money accumulated from the GET surcharge, the State, the bogeyman, will come and rob us of it. Let's them try. I am not concerned. In my opinion, all of these are lame excuses, that for one reason or another, are aimed at circumventing due process.

What happened to the Mayor's promise of last November when he said "we won't begin construction without a Record of Decision"? I rely on you to stop the deception so long associated with this rail project, and ask the mayor to keep his promise.

In summary, no local funds should be encumbered until all requirements of the EIS, and possibly a supplemental EIS, have been completed to the satisfaction of the federal authorities and the Record of Decision has been issued by FTA assuring us of federal funding. Please vote **No** on this Bill.

Thank you very much,

  
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