



## DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

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### DRAFT MINUTES

#### **Standing Committee on Transportation Meeting**

Location: Virtual via Zoom and 1010 Richards Street, Room 118

Date: November 17, 2025

Time: 11:00 a.m.

PRESENT: Violet Horvath, Chairperson; Gerald Ohta, Teri Spinola-Campbell, Charlotte Townsend, Board Members; Bryan Mick, Mylynne Simon, Kristine Pagano, Staff

PUBLIC

PARTICIPANTS: Anna Lopez Asuncion, Ryan Tamashiro

SIGN LANGUAGE

INTERPRETERS: Jenny Blake and Regina Sapko

- I. Chairperson Violet Horvath called the meeting to order at 11:02 a.m.
- II. Committee members and staff introduced themselves.
- III. Chairperson Violet Horvath reported no written public testimony was submitted.
- IV. The Committee approved the September 8, 2025 meeting minutes (M/S/P Spinola-Campbell/Ohta).
- V. Review of DCAB Legislative Position Statements for Transportation and Mobility Related Bills and Resolutions

The Committee reviewed the position statements adopted by the Legislative Committee and did not have any suggested amendments to them.

#### VI. Unfinished Business

- A. City and County of Honolulu Bill 45 Relating to the City Transit System. The purpose of this bill is to update requirements pertaining to the City Transit System in order to promote public safety, system security, service quality, and multimodal transit options.

Staff reported the City and County of Honolulu's Bill 45 (2025) Relating to the City Transit system has yet to be scheduled for a second hearing. This bill would allow a rider to be denied transit service if the odor of their belongings interfered with other riders' ability to utilize the transit service.

DCAB was concerned this would be arbitrarily enforced by public transit operators and would lead to disability discrimination complaints.

B. Review of County of Hawaii Paratransit Service responses

- (1) Hele-On Shared Ride Program (East Hawaii).
- (2) Hele-On Ka Ho'okele Rural Transportation Program.
- (3) Hele-On Kako'o paratransit services.

The Committee reviewed responses provided by the Hawaii County's Mass Transit Agency (MTA) about their transit programs. The Committee would like to see the data broken down further, including by month, and asked staff to see if they could find it in the National Transit database. Staff noted that the past several years, bills have been introduced at the Legislature to update the statewide mobility management plan and fund related positions. None of the bills have passed. Perhaps a bill would have an easier time passing if it focused on the counties other than the City and County of Honolulu, which does not have the same gaps in service as Hawaii County. Committee member Charlotte Townsend mentioned she was part of the original group that drafted the mobility management plan, and it was heavily focused on Oahu to the detriment of other counties. The Committee agreed to ask MTA to present at a future meeting next summer.

C. Richards Street Bike Lane and Loading Zone

Staff reported that the City and County of Honolulu removed two (2) metered parking spaces in front of the Kamamalu Building and the entire curb along Richards Street is now a loading zone.

D. United States Department of Transportation Final Rule – Ensuring Safe Accommodations for Air Travelers with Disabilities Using Wheelchairs – Delayed Enforcement.

Staff reported that the United States Department of Justice has announced they will delay enforcement of the new regulations until December 31, 2026, while they pursue rulemaking to amend or repeal the regulations. The Board has authorized staff to submit testimony in opposition to any proposal to repeal something the Board had supported. Committee member Charlotte Townsend mentioned its unconscionable the federal government is viewing this as a cost of business issue and not a civil rights issue.

VII. Standing Agenda Topics

A. Public Transit and Paratransit

City and County of Honolulu Bill 54 (2025) – Relating to Public Transit.

Staff reported that Bill 54 (2025) which proposed changes to the City and County of Honolulu's public transit and paratransit fares has been deferred. Disability advocates were concerned that the bill proposed to eliminate fare waivers for Personal Care Attendants (PCA) on fixed route vehicles. The City and County of Honolulu's Department of Transportation Services (DTS) indicated they were worried about PCA fraud, but did not state how many PCAs ride public transit on an average day or what the estimated rate of fraud is.

#### City and County of Honolulu Auditor's February 2025 Report on Rail (Skyline) Operations.

Staff reported that the audit had a chapter dedicated to accessibility issues around and inside the transit stations. DTS responded to the audit and pointed out they do not control the land around the rail stations. Committee member Charlotte Townsend commented there is some discussion among Skyline riders with disabilities of filing a class action lawsuit relating to this issue. Staff added that the Pearl Highlands station has a ramp which appears to not comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG). The most concerning conclusion by the auditor is that the City and County of Honolulu has done very little outreach to the disability community when it comes to the planning and operational design of rail and rail stations.

#### Response from the City and County of Honolulu – Restrooms at Rail (Skyline) Stations.

Staff shared responses from DTS concerning the restroom policy at rail stations and the misconception of DTS staff that the ADA was not applicable to these as they are designated as private employee restrooms. Staff pointed out to DTS that the ADA covers employee restrooms, and as their official policy is to let riders use these employee restrooms upon request, they are considered a government program or activity. DTS confirmed in their response that "Our overall policy remains that restrooms at Skyline stations are available for urgent use by all passengers."

### **B. Street and Highways**

#### Department of Justice Press Release – Uber Sued for Denying Rides to Passengers with Service Dogs, Wheelchairs

Staff noted observations of the federal government to be attempting to roll back protections for people with disabilities in most areas, except for Uber where they are aggressively pursuing them for alleged ADA violations. ADA compliance is an ongoing challenge for ride share companies as they have a higher turnover rate of independent contractors and vehicles than a taxi company which has employees, but it is something they must address.

### **C. Pedestrian Mobility and Built Environment**

City and County of Honolulu Charter Proposal – require the City to prioritize the expansion, repair, and improvement of sidewalks

Staff reported there are several proposals submitted to the City and County of Honolulu Charter Commission that seek to improve or increase the amount of accessible sidewalks island wide. Staff will track which proposals survive the Commission's first round of cuts and submit testimony on any that advance.

The rest of the agenda was deferred due to time restraints.

VIII. The next meeting will be Monday, January 12, 2026, at 11:00 a.m.

IX. The meeting adjourned at 12:01 p.m.

NOTE: All votes were unanimous unless otherwise noted.

Respectfully submitted,

BRYAN K. MICK