

## PEA Committee

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**From:** Sonya Niess <sonyaniess@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 03, 2018 11:45 AM  
**To:** PEA Committee  
**Subject:** Testimony in SUPPORT for PEA-41 Smoke Free Vehicles with Keiki  
**Attachments:** Testimony In Support of PEA-41 Smoke Free Vehicles.pdf

Aloha PEA Committee,

Please find my testimony attached in support of PEA-41 Smoke Free Vehicles. If you are unable to open it, let me know and I will resend in the body of the email.

aloha  
Sonya

To: The Honorable Yuki Lei Sugimura, Chair  
The Honorable Stacy Crivello, Vice Chair  
Honorable Members of the Maui County Council Policy, Economic Development, & Agriculture  
Committee

Fr: Sonya Niess, Maui County Resident

Date: 1/3/18

Re: STRONG SUPPORT for PEA-41, Prohibiting Smoking in Vehicles When Persons Under the Age of  
Eighteen are Present

Hrg: January 4th, 2018 at 1:30 pm at Council Chambers, Kalana O Maui Building, 200 S High Street

I strongly support PEA-41, which would have the County of Maui prohibit smoking in a motor vehicle when a minor under the age of eighteen is present.

We need to protect our children from secondhand smoke. Secondhand smoke in a car can be up to ten times more toxic than what the EPA considers hazardous air quality, even when a window is down.

Thousands of children breathe in secondhand smoke in their own homes and cars daily. Inhaling secondhand smoke is especially harmful because children's lungs are still developing. Every time they inhale secondhand smoke, they breathe in 7,000 chemicals, 200 of which are poisonous, and 50 are known to cause cancer.

Regular exposure to secondhand smoke can cause children to miss school and even require trips to the hospital. Inhaling toxic smoke compromises their ability to perform well in school and engage in physical activity.

Smoke-free car laws just like child safety seats, seat belts, and no cellphone use while driving, help to protect the health and safety of our children, and these laws are enforced in similar ways. Passing smoke-free cars into law will help decrease our children's exposure to secondhand smoke and educate parents and other adults about the dangers of smoking in a car when a minor is present.

Just as Maui County has been protecting the public and its visitors from the dangers of secondhand smoke, I ask that you also protect our children and young people from the harmful impacts of smoking in a vehicle.

**I also ask that you include electronic smoking devices** in this law. The Surgeon General has stated that, "E-cigarette aerosol is not harmless. It can contain harmful and potentially harmful constituents including nicotine. Nicotine exposure during adolescence can cause addiction and can harm the developing adolescent brain" (E-Cigarette Use Among Youth and Young Adults: A Report of the Surgeon General, 2016).

I respectfully ask that you pass PEA-41 and eliminate smoking of cigarettes and use of electronic smoking devices in cars when a minor is present in Maui County. Maui County has enacted strong laws to protect the public's health, including our Tobacco-Free Beaches and parks law passed in 2014. Maui County is creating an environment where healthy behaviors are the norm, ensuring that our children see and adopt healthy behaviors for themselves.

Mahalo,

Sonya Niess, MPH  
Pukalani, Maui, Hawai'i