

PEA Committee

From: John A. H. Tomoso <john.a.h.tomoso@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 03, 2018 11:59 AM
To: PEA Committee
Cc: Katie Folio
Subject: PEA-41 Written Testimony
Attachments: CTFH-Maui-SF Cars Testimony-PEA-41-01-03-18 .docx

SEE ATTACHED

John A. Hau'oli Tomoso+, MSW, ACSW, LSW
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808-280-1749

"O na kino malu i ka lani, malu e hoe...(O beings sheltered by the heavens, clear our path of all hindrance.)"

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

Fr: John A. H. Tomoso+, MSW, ACSW, LSW, Coalition for a Tobacco Free Hawai'i
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Date: January 3, 2018

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

Hearing: January 4th, 2018 at 1:30 pm at Council Chambers, Kalana O Maui Building, 200 S High Street – 8th floor

I strongly support PEA-41, which would have the County of Maui prohibit smoking in a motor vehicle when a minor (keiki) under the age of eighteen is present. PEA-41 represents how we can protect our quality of life, intergenerationally, as an island community. It represents how we can combat what I know to be an ongoing assault on our community's way and quality of life.

We need to protect our children, our keiki, 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. As an island community, the land we live on, the air we breathe, the ocean that surrounds us makes us all very intimate with our environment and with each other. We are "close up" to each other and things, good and bad, circulate amongst us in ways that bigger and wider lands and climates filter out.

So many of our keiki, our children breathe in secondhand smoke in their own homes and cars daily. Inhaling secondhand smoke is especially harmful because their 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. I know this to be a big public health concern. If allowed to go on, unchecked, this will cause health problems for our keiki that will be with them as they mature into adulthood. There will be healthcare costs.

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 keiki, our children; indeed all of us. 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. Passing PEA-41 will allow our healthcare system, and the resources we have to deliver it, to be more efficient and cost-effective; to be more pro-active and not merely reactive.

Please also include the increasing presence of electronic smoking devices in this law too. 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).

Clean air, air that is free of impurities and noxious substances, like clean water, is a necessity; some would say a right, in order to live a healthy life in a quality of life that we all share. I respectfully ask that you pass PEA-41 and eliminate smoking of cigarettes and use of electronic smoking devices in cars, in Maui County, when keiki, minors are present.

Mahalo a nui,
John A. H. Tomoso+
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