

**HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL**  
**KE KANIHELA O KE KALANA O HONOLULU**  
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

No. 23-271

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**RESOLUTION**

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**URGING THE HAWAII STATE LEGISLATURE TO ENACT LEGISLATION ELIMINATING THE REQUIREMENT TO CONDUCT AN ENGINEERING STUDY FOR REDUCTIONS OF MAXIMUM SPEED LIMITS.**

WHEREAS, traffic safety continues to be a top concern among the residents of the City and County of Honolulu ("City"); and

WHEREAS, as of October 11, 2023, there were 42 traffic fatalities on O'ahu in 2023, compared to 37 at the same time in 2022; and

WHEREAS, most speed limits in residential neighborhoods are set at 25 miles per hour; and

WHEREAS, in many residential neighborhoods, vehicles traveling at 25 miles per hour pose a safety concern for pedestrians and other roadway users; and

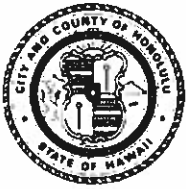
WHEREAS, to improve overall traffic safety, the City's Vision Zero Action Plan employs a multi-faceted approach that incorporates safe speeds as one of the important principles to lower the incidence of traffic injuries and fatalities; and

WHEREAS, improving safety is also one of the objectives of the Complete Streets policy of the City, codified in Section 14-18.2, Revised Ordinances of Honolulu 2021; and

WHEREAS, speed remains a key causal factor in traffic crashes, as the National Association of City Transportation Officials reports that a 10 percent reduction in average speed resulted in 19 percent fewer injury-causing crashes, 27 percent fewer severe crashes, and 34 percent fewer fatal crashes; and

WHEREAS, reductions in speed limits have a proven record of reducing traffic accidents, such as in the City of Seattle, which saw a 17 percent drop in the likelihood of an injury-causing crash after that city reduced speed limits from 30 miles per hour to 25 miles per hour on its arterial roads, and from 25 miles per hour to 20 miles per hour on most of its residential streets; and

WHEREAS, a reduction in speed limits in residential neighborhoods will benefit all members of the community; and



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WHEREAS, Section 291C-107, Hawaii Revised Statutes ("HRS") requires that in order to either increase or decrease maximum speed limits on City streets, the City must first consider the findings of an engineering study conducted for the road where the maximum speed limit is being set; and

WHEREAS, HRS Section 291C-107 requires the engineering study to include, among other requirements, a survey of highway and traffic conditions, roadway characteristics, roadside developments and environments, motor vehicle crashes resulting in deaths or injuries, and prevailing speeds as determined by traffic engineering measurements; and

WHEREAS, although the conduct of an engineering study may be appropriate in those instances in which a speed limit is being proposed to be increased, the conduct of an engineering study to effect a reduction in speed limits, particularly in residential neighborhoods, is costly, time-consuming, and results in unnecessary delays in the implementation of important roadway safety measures; and

WHEREAS, eliminating the barrier of an engineering study for reductions of maximum speed limits would facilitate efficient speed limit reductions and provide for the creation of safer streets in the City's residential communities; and

WHEREAS, in order to facilitate a more uniform application and approach to road safety, an amendment to HRS Section 291C-107 seems to be the most appropriate legislative solution; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu that it urges the Hawai'i State Legislature to enact legislation eliminating the requirement for the City to conduct an engineering study for reductions of maximum speed limits on City streets; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that should such legislation be enacted by the Hawai'i State Legislature, the City and County of Honolulu's Department of Transportation Services is urged to assess whether maximum speed limits throughout the City's residential areas should be lowered from 25 miles per hour to 15 miles per hour; and



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BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the Hawai'i State Senate, the Speaker of the Hawai'i State House of Representatives, the Hawai'i State Director of Transportation, the Mayor, and the Director of Transportation Services.

INTRODUCED BY:

*Esther Kia'ania*

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DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

OCT 30 2023

Honolulu, Hawai'i

Councilmembers