BILL026(26)
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 226

COUNCIL

COUNCIL Meeting

Meeting Date: Jun 3, 2026 @ 10:00 AM

Support: 1

Oppose: 1

I wish to comment: 0

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Pikachu Shelby Billionaire	presidentbillionaire@gmail.com	96792
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Ohana Unity Party	Oppose	May 31, 2026 @ 08:16 AM

Testimony:

Oppose Bill 26 (2026) – Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation (HART) Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2027

Chair Waters, Vice Chair Kia‘āina, and Members of the Honolulu City Council:

I respectfully submit this testimony in STRONG OPPOSITION to Bill 26 (2026), the Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2027.

According to HART's own budget submission, the proposed FY2027 HART Operating Budget totals approximately $177.6 million, an increase of $2.8 million over the prior fiscal year. At the same time, HART's proposed Capital Budget totals approximately $891.5 million, bringing total HART spending authority for FY2027 to approximately $1.07 BILLION.

Let that number sink in.

ONE BILLION DOLLARS.

In a single fiscal year.

For a project that taxpayers were originally told would cost approximately $5.1 billion. Today, public estimates have exceeded $10 billion and continue to climb.

That means rail has already experienced cost growth measured in BILLIONS of dollars.

Yet despite this history, taxpayers are once again being asked to approve another year of spending.

THE QUESTION IS SIMPLE:

WHEN DOES IT END?

For years, Honolulu residents have heard the same arguments:

• Just a little more funding.
• Just a little more borrowing.
• Just a little more time.

• Just one more budget increase.

Meanwhile, taxpayers continue paying the bill.

Honolulu families are struggling with:

• Median home prices near or above $1 million.
• Rising property taxes.
• Rising sewer fees.
• Rising electricity costs.
• Rising insurance costs.
• Rising food prices.

Yet government continues finding billions for rail.

ACCOUNTABILITY HAS NEVER CAUGHT UP TO THE SPENDING

The rail project has become a textbook example of why taxpayers lose trust in government.

Original cost projections have more than doubled.

Completion dates have repeatedly slipped.

Contractors have publicly alleged significant management failures and delay-related costs running into hundreds of millions of dollars.

And now taxpayers are being asked to approve another $177.6 million operating budget on top of an $891.5 million capital budget.

If a private company exceeded its original budget by billions of dollars, investors would demand accountability.

Government should be held to at least the same standard.

OPPORTUNITY COSTS

Every dollar spent on rail is a dollar unavailable for:

• Road maintenance.

• Flood mitigation.

• Sewer infrastructure.

• Parks maintenance.

• Public safety.

• Emergency preparedness.

• Property tax relief.

The FY2027 HART budget alone exceeds the annual budgets of many government agencies and programs that residents interact with every day.

FUTURE GENERATIONS WILL PAY

What concerns me most is that these decisions are not merely affecting today's taxpayers.

Future residents who never voted for this project will continue paying for the debt, maintenance, operations, and future expansion costs associated with rail.

Government officials come and go.

The debt remains.

The obligations remain.

The taxpayers remain.

THE CITY SHOULD CHANGE COURSE

Before approving another year of rail spending, the City should provide:

• Independent financial audits.

• Updated lifecycle cost projections.

• Full operating cost forecasts.

• Long-term maintenance estimates.

• Detailed debt exposure reports.

• Transparent ridership and performance metrics.

Taxpayers deserve answers before another billion dollars is committed.

CONCLUSION

After more than a decade of cost overruns, delays, and escalating expenditures, Honolulu taxpayers deserve fiscal discipline—not another billion-dollar rail budget.

The City should focus on maintaining existing infrastructure, reducing liabilities, improving accountability, and protecting taxpayers from endless spending commitments.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Honolulu City Council to vote NO on Bill 26 (2026).

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Master Shelby "Pikachu" Billionaire, HRM

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Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jun 1, 2026 @ 05:30 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Councilmembers,

I write in strong support of Bill 26, which provides the essential administrative and financial foundation that keeps the Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation functioning as Skyline continues to grow. A well-resourced HART is critical to ensuring that Honolulu's investment in rail transit delivers reliable, long-term service to the communities it connects. Sustained operational funding is the backbone of any successful transit system, and passing this bill sends a clear signal that Honolulu remains committed to building a transit future worthy of its people.