BILL027(26)
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 228

COUNCIL

COUNCIL Meeting

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

Support: 1

Oppose: 1

I wish to comment: 1

Name:	Email:	Zip:
PIkachu Shelby Billionaire	presidentbillionaire@gmail.com	96792
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Ohana Unity Party	Oppose	May 31, 2026 @ 08:19 AM

Testimony:

Oppose Bill 27 (2026) – HART Capital 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 27 (2026), the Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2027.

According to the budget documents, HART is requesting approximately $891.5 million in capital spending authority for FY2027.

That is nearly ONE BILLION DOLLARS in additional rail-related capital expenditures in a single fiscal year.

Taxpayers deserve to stop and ask a simple question:

How much is enough?

The Honolulu rail project was originally presented to the public with a cost estimate of approximately $5.1 billion.

Today, public estimates have exceeded $10 billion.

That means the project has grown by more than $5 billion beyond its original estimate.

A cost increase of that magnitude would be unacceptable in virtually any private-sector project.

Yet year after year, government returns to taxpayers requesting additional funding, additional appropriations, and additional borrowing.

THE NUMBERS SHOULD ALARM EVERY TAXPAYER

• Original rail estimate: approximately $5.1 billion.

• Current public estimates: more than $10 billion.

• Increase above original estimate: more than $5 billion.

• FY2027 HART Capital Budget request: approximately $891.5 million.

When viewed together, these numbers tell a troubling story.

The project is no longer measured in millions.

It is measured in billions.

And taxpayers continue to absorb the consequences.

OPPORTUNITY COSTS

Every dollar directed toward rail is a dollar unavailable for:

• Road repairs.

• Flood mitigation.

• Sewer infrastructure.

• Public safety facilities.

• Parks maintenance.

• Emergency preparedness.

• Property tax relief.

The Council should explain why another $891.5 million for rail represents a better use of public resources than these competing priorities.

ACCOUNTABILITY BEFORE APPROPRIATION

Before approving nearly $900 million in additional capital spending, taxpayers deserve answers:

1. What is the current total projected lifecycle cost of the rail system?

2. What are the projected annual operating and maintenance costs once the full system is operational?

3. What additional funding sources may be required if future costs exceed current projections?

4. What specific safeguards exist to prevent future cost overruns?

If these questions cannot be answered clearly, taxpayers should be extremely cautious about approving additional spending authority.

A REQUEST TO THE COUNCIL

To demonstrate that public testimony is being carefully reviewed, I respectfully request that Council members address at least one of the four fiscal questions above during public deliberations on this measure.

Doing so would strengthen public confidence in both the budget process and the value of citizen participation.

THE BROADER ISSUE

Many residents increasingly believe that major budget measures are approved regardless of public opposition.

Whether that perception is accurate or not, the best way to restore trust is through transparency, accountability, and meaningful discussion of the financial risks associated with these decisions.

Approving another $891.5 million in rail spending without rigorous public scrutiny would only deepen those concerns.

CONCLUSION

After more than a decade of escalating costs, delayed timelines, and repeated requests for additional funding, taxpayers deserve greater accountability before another major rail appropriation is approved.

The City should focus on fiscal discipline, core infrastructure needs, and protecting future generations from unnecessary financial obligations.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Honolulu City Council to vote NO on Bill 27 (2026).

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Master Shelby "Pikachu" Billionaire, HRM

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Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Jun 1, 2026 @ 05:31 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Councilmembers,

I write in strong support of Bill 27, which advances the continued construction of the Honolulu High Capacity Transit Project and moves Skyline closer to fulfilling its promise as a transformative regional transit system. Completing the rail alignment is not only a transportation priority — it is an economic development imperative, as every station represents an opportunity for transit-oriented development that can deliver affordable housing, walkable neighborhoods, and sustainable growth along the corridor. Honolulu cannot afford to lose momentum on this generational infrastructure investment, and I urge the Council to pass this bill without delay.

Name:	Email:	Zip:

Lisa Jaso	eastwestccc@yahoo.com	96817
Representing: Self	Position: I wish to comment	Submitted: Jun 2, 2026 @ 02:47 PM
Testimony: Oral testimony via video conference only.		