BILL047(26)
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 323

COUNCIL

COUNCIL Meeting

Meeting Date: Aug 12, 2026 @ 10:00 AM

Support: 5

Oppose: 8

I wish to comment: 1

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Jonathan Huynh	jhweather123@yahoo.com	96792
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Oppose	Aug 7, 2026 @ 07:23 AM

Testimony:

Aloha,

I own a car. I welcome saving some money on my taxes. But this bill isn't designed to help people like me, and it certainly isn't for families struggling most on this island.

The problem starts with the math. A 1.5 cent cut per pound sounds fair, but it isn't. A family in a 2,800 pound Honda Civic saves about $42 a year. A household in a 6,000 pound luxury SUV saves closer to $90. The heavier your car, the bigger your break. This bill literally rewards weight.

And here's the physics: heavier vehicles don't just do a little more damage to our roads. They do a lot more. A big SUV doesn't cause twice the wear of a small car; it causes about sixteen times the wear. Yet under this bill, the SUV owner gets the bigger tax cut. That means drivers of smaller cars and non-drivers are subsidizing the destruction caused by the heaviest vehicles on the road.

Then there's the cost to our roads. This bill cuts $20 to $30 million in road repair money every year. That's nearly half of what we currently spend on repaving. The result is simple: more potholes, worse roads. Any driver celebrating their $42 savings will spend far more than that fixing tires and alignments from hitting cracks we can't afford to patch.

Think what that lost money could buy instead. Safer bike lanes for kids, better bus routes for people who need them, sidewalks that don't trip our kupuna. Those are investments that help everyone, every single day.

I see a pattern here. Bus fares go up for people who rely on transit, while tax cuts go to drivers of luxury cars. Renters get nothing while homeowners get small breaks. Seniors lose their extra protections while the wealthy get the same benefit as those who truly need it. The help always seems to flow up, not down.

There's a better way. Cut the tax a little for cars under 3,500 pounds. Keep it steady for mid-size cars. Raise it a bit for the biggest SUVs. That gives real relief to working families, keeps our roads funded, and makes our streets safer by discouraging oversized vehicles in our neighborhoods.

$42 a year won't save a family. $90 for a luxury car owner won't fix what's broken. Paved, safe streets help everyone. Let's invest in that.

I urge you to vote no on Bill 47. Let's pass a smarter tax that helps the right people and keeps our island moving.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Cody Sula	hncsula@gmail.com	96707
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
HAWAII IRONWORKERS STABILIZATION FUND	Support	Aug 7, 2026 @ 10:21 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Darius Kila	repkila@capitol.hawaii.gov	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Aug 7, 2026 @ 11:11 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Johnnie-Mae Perry	waianaenb569@gmail.com	96792
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Oppose	Aug 8, 2026 @ 02:47 AM

Testimony:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, oppose and stand on D-0483 on BILL047(26)

REALTING TO THE MOTOR VEHICLE WEIGHT TAX.

FREE PUBLIC PARKING BY DERELIC VEHICLES, UNCOLLECTABLE REVENUE BY THE CITY. MAJOR PROBLEM NEEDS TO BE ADDRESSED AND RESOLVED BY THE CITY AND DEADBEAT OWNERS.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Jacob Wiencek	jacob.m.wiencek@pm.me	96815
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	I wish to comment	Aug 8, 2026 @ 03:15 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Councilmembers,

Bill 47 proposes to offer relief for vehicle owners and a time of high cost of living pressures; this should be considered. However, I am worried about the downstream fiscal impacts of this bill. Our city budget is already tight, and a sizable cut could harm essential transportation and infrastructure maintenance. I urge the Council to consider carefully not just the relief to everyday car owners but also the impacts to the city budget and maintaining our transportation infrastructure.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Mark Garrity	mark.garrity@oahumpo.org	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization	Oppose	Aug 10, 2026 @ 08:56 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:

Damien Waikoloa	damien.waikoloa@gmail.com	96822
Representing: Self	Position: Oppose	Submitted: Aug 11, 2026 @ 08:54 AM
Name: Ted Kefalas	Email: tkefalas@grassrootinstitute.org	Zip: 96813
Representing: Grassroot Institute of Hawaii	Position: Support	Submitted: Aug 11, 2026 @ 09:37 AM
Name: Reine Ah Moo	Email: boardinwaikiki@gmail.com	Zip: 96815
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Aug 11, 2026 @ 09:33 PM

Testimony:

A fair and sustainable motor vehicle weight tax is an important source of funding for transportation infrastructure and public services. As the Council evaluates updates to the weight tax, I encourage consideration of both revenue needs and the financial impact on residents and local businesses that rely on their vehicles every day.

Any changes should be transparent, easy for the public to understand, and implemented with sufficient notice before taking effect. I also encourage periodic review of the program to ensure it remains equitable as vehicle technology continues to evolve.

Name: Amy Brown	Email: alohastar77@yahoo.com	Zip: 96816
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Aug 11, 2026 @ 10:58 PM
Name: Dale VanderBrink	Email: sandmandfgh@gmail.com	Zip: 96814
Representing: Self	Position: Oppose	Submitted: Aug 12, 2026 @ 12:09 AM

Testimony:

I oppose bill 47 as it reduces an annual cost that has little impact upon people,. All while just last year the council increased bus fare. The priorities of these actions do not align with helping those residents who need it most.

Name: Trevor Nagamine	Email: tnagamine.nb25@gmail.com	Zip: 96789
Representing: Self	Position: Oppose	Submitted: Aug 12, 2026 @ 05:27 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Trevor Nagamine	tnagamine.nb25@gmail.com	96789
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Oppose	Aug 12, 2026 @ 06:14 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Luca Cuniberti	Lcuniberti8002@gmail.com	96712-9501
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Oppose	Aug 12, 2026 @ 07:23 AM

Testimony:

Aloha Chair Waters, Vice Chair Okimoto, and councilmembers,

I am writing today to testify in the strongest possible terms AGAINST Bill 47. The hypocrisy displayed by this council—particularly by certain members—over the past year is truly outrageous. While claiming to care about affordability, you offer residents a token discount ($50 is hardly enough to fill a gas tank), all while recklessly endangering our city's long-term fiscal stability.

The loss of $50,000,000 is NOT insignificant and will affect our public transportation more than anything. Worse still, the sponsors of this bill have utterly failed to identify any responsible plan to replace these lost funds. As a city, we have been on a tight budget, and now will be on an even tighter one or even a deficit.

I dont see how putting a whole office of people out of work, putting our transportation funding in jeopardy, and more is going to save ANYONE money. Those who support this bill risk being remembered as the ones whose choices left a lasting scar on our city, our Kapuna, our keiki, and all the hard-working people of the City and County of Honolulu.

Mahalo, and please make the right decision for our future, and not for short-term political gains.

-- Luca Z Cuniberti

Iron Workers Stabilization Fund

T. George Paris
Managing Director

August 12, 2026
10:00 am

Honolulu City Council
Honolulu Hale Council Chamber

Re: Support for Bill 47 (2026) – Relating to the Motor Vehicle Weight Tax

Aloha Chair Waters and Members of the Honolulu City Council,

The Hawaii Ironworkers Stabilization Fund, I am writing to express our support for Bill 47 (2026), which proposes amendments to the motor vehicle weight tax.

This measure is a step toward providing financial relief to the taxpayers of the City and County of Honolulu. Under the provisions of Bill 47, taxpayers will save $45 to $60 per vehicle. For families owning multiple vehicles, these savings add up, providing much-needed relief. While this may seem modest, for families struggling with Hawaii's cost of living, every dollar saved is a dollar that can be redirected toward household needs such as utilities, groceries, gasoline, and medical expenses, etc.

The Hawaii Ironworkers Stabilization Fund is committed to supporting policies that promote long-term affordability and economic stability for local residents. Hawaii currently imposes one of the highest financial burdens on working households in the nation. Strategic tax adjustments like those proposed in Bill 47 help alleviate the disparity that often forces our local families and skilled workforce to consider relocating to more affordable regions.

We respectfully urge the Honolulu City Council to pass Bill 47 (2026) to support our families and improve the affordability of living in our islands.

T. George Paris

Managing Director

94-497 UKEE STREET WAIPAHU, HAWAII 96797 (808) 677-0375

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Hale o nā Luna Makaʻāinana

STATE OF HAWAIʻI
STATE CAPITOL
415 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAIʻI 96813

August 7, 2026

Meeting: August 12, 2026, 10:00 a.m.

Second Reading
Regular Meeting, City Council Chamber
Honolulu, Hawaiʻi

RE: Testimony in Support of Bill 47(2026), RELATING TO MOTOR VEHICLE WEIGHT TAX; Reduces the Vehicle Weight Tax Rates for Motor Vehicles

Aloha Chair, Vice-Chair, and esteemed members of the Honolulu City Council,

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of Bill 47 (2026), which seeks to reduce the Vehicle Weight Tax Rates for passenger vehicles, trucks and noncommercial vehicles with a net weight of 6,500 pounds or less, and certain vehicles designed primarily for carrying property.

I strongly support this measure because it provides meaningful tax relief for the residents of Oʻahu and moves the City's vehicle weight tax structure closer to that of the other counties. For many working families, owning a vehicle is not a luxury, it is a necessity. On the Waiʻanae Coast and throughout Oʻahu, many residents have no practical alternative to driving to work, school, medical appointments, and other daily responsibilities. Every opportunity to reduce the cost of vehicle ownership makes a difference.

This is an issue I have been working on at the state level as well. During the 2026 Legislative Session, I introduced legislation to establish a statewide cap on county vehicle weight taxes to encourage greater consistency across the counties while providing relief to taxpayers. Although that measure did not become law this year, I remain committed to finding ways to reduce the financial burden associated with vehicle ownership while ensuring counties have the resources necessary to maintain and improve our transportation infrastructure.

I recommend need based subsidies for qualified households and individuals based on federal and state income assessments.

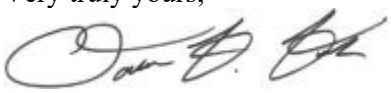
Representative Darius K. Kila
House District 44— Maʻili, Lualualei, Nānākuli, Honokai Hale Ko Olina
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 403 / Honolulu, HI 96813
Phone: (808) 586-9480 / Fax: (808) 586-9485 / Email: RepKila@capitol.hawaii.gov

Reducing the vehicle weight tax also promotes responsible vehicle ownership by making registration more affordable. When registration costs become more manageable, more residents are able to register their vehicles on time, improving compliance and reducing unnecessary penalties.

I commend the City Council for taking this step and encourage you to continue exploring thoughtful, fiscally responsible ways to gradually reduce the overall cost of vehicle ownership for O‘ahu residents. Incremental changes like this can have a meaningful impact on household budgets while strengthening public confidence in our tax system.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in support of this bill. Should you have any questions, you may contact me at (808) 586-9480 or by email at repkila@capitol.hawaii.gov.

Very truly yours,



Darius K. Kila
Representative, House District 44
Mā‘ili, Lualualei, Nānākuli, Honokai Hale,
Ko ‘Olina

Testimony of the Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization

Honolulu City Council
August 12, 2026 at 10:00AM
City Council Chamber & Videoconference

Bill 47 (2026)
Relating to the Motor Vehicle Weight Tax

Dear Chair Waters and Councilmembers,

The Oʻahu Metropolitan Planning Organization (OahuMPO) **opposes Bill 047 (26)** which would reduce the county vehicle weight tax on Oʻahu for motor vehicles designed primarily for carrying passengers as well as trucks and noncommercial vehicles having a net weight of 6,500 pounds or less.

While the OahuMPO appreciates the intent of the measure, this provision would significantly reduce a key local revenue source that supports transportation system maintenance, safety, and capital improvements. A reduction in these funds would directly impact the City and County of Honolulu's ability to implement projects identified in the Oʻahu Regional Transportation Plan 2050 (ORTP 2050) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Stable and flexible local funding is essential to advancing ORTP 2050 goals, including maintaining a safe, resilient, and multimodal transportation system. Reductions in county revenue may delay or constrain critical investments in roadway maintenance, complete streets, and safety improvements. As most federally funded transportation projects require a local match, this reduction in local revenue could place future federal funding at risk.

In addition, lowering the vehicle weight tax may create unintended consequences by incentivizing the purchase and use of heavier vehicles. This could contribute to increased roadway wear and heightened safety risks for all users, particularly people walking, rolling, and biking.

The OahuMPO is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) on the island of Oʻahu responsible for carrying out a multimodal transportation planning

process, including the development of a long-range (25-year horizon) metropolitan transportation plan, referred to as the Oʻahu Regional Transportation Plan (ORTP), which encourages and promotes a safe and efficient transportation system to serve the mobility needs of people and freight (including walkways, bicycles, and transit), fosters economic growth and development, and takes into consideration resiliency needs, while minimizing fuel consumption and air pollution (23 CFR 450.300).

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

Damien Waikoloa
Honolulu, HI 96822

Honolulu City Council
530 S. King St.
Honolulu HI 96813

August 12, 2026

RE: Oppose Bill 47 (2026) - Relating to The Motor Vehicle Weight Tax

Aloha Chair Waters, Vice Chair Tupola, and Council Members,

I respectfully submit this testimony in **opposition to Bill 47.**

I oppose this measure because it represents a misguided approach to reducing the cost of living for O‘ahu residents. While lowering taxes may sound appealing, this bill provides only token savings for drivers while reducing City revenue that could instead be invested in projects and services that would produce meaningful, lasting reductions in the cost of living and improve quality of life for all residents.

Despite one Councilmember boasting on Instagram that this bill would save the owner of a 2026 Toyota Sienna about **$69 per year, that amount of money is meaningless when compared to the daily and weekly expenses facing O‘ahu families.** At today's gas prices ($5.45/gal.), $69 would not even fill the entire tank (18 gal.) of that Toyota Sienna. For the average family, that tank of gas would likely last only three or four days of commuting before the savings disappear entirely. **A one-time annual tax reduction of this size does nothing to meaningfully reduce the financial burden of living on O‘ahu.**

The Department of Customer Services estimates that this bill would reduce City revenue by approximately $20 million to $30 million each year. For comparison, the City's most recent budget allocated approximately $47.3 million for road maintenance. The question residents should be asking is simple: **What will be cut from the next budget to make up for this lost revenue? How many potholes will go unfilled so a vehicle owner can save about $69 a year?** Ironically, a quick internet search shows wheel alignments in Honolulu starting at around $150, more than double the annual savings this bill promises. Instead of reducing the revenue available to maintain our roads, the City should be investing more in giving commuters real choices so they can walk, bike, ride the bus, or take rail instead of driving. We should be making our streets safer for children walking to school and for kūpuna catching the bus to buy groceries.

Finally, this bill continues a pattern of transportation and economic policy that favors driving over other ways of getting around. **While the Council raises bus fares for transit riders, it**

proposes tax reductions for drivers that provide little meaningful financial relief. At the same time, the City loses revenue that could be used to fill potholes, repave aging roads, replace failing sidewalks, improve bike infrastructure, and install traffic calming measures that make our streets safer for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists. These are investments that residents notice every day because they reduce vehicle damage, improve safety, and expand transportation choices. Small annual tax reductions may make for good headlines, but well-maintained streets and safer neighborhoods deliver far greater value to every resident.

I respectfully ask the Council to reject Bill 47. Instead of pursuing another round of symbolic tax reductions, I urge the Council to focus on meaningful investments and economic policies that reduce the weekly and monthly cost of living while strengthening our transportation system and making our communities safer for everyone.

Mahalo,

Damien Waikoloa

GRASSROOT INSTITUTE OF HAWAII

1050 Bishop St. #508
Honolulu, HI 96813
808-864-1776
info@grassrootinstitute.org

Removing barriers to Hawaii's prosperity

Aug. 12, 2026, 10 a.m.
Honolulu Hale

To: Honolulu City Council
Tommy Waters, Chair
Andria Tupola, Vice Chair

From: Grassroot Institute of Hawaii
Ted Kefalas, Director of Strategic Campaigns

RE: Bill 47 (2026) — RELATING TO THE MOTOR VEHICLE WEIGHT TAX

Aloha Chair Waters, Vice Chair Tupola and other members of the Council,

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii **supports** Bill 47 (2026), which would cut the city's vehicle weight tax by 1.5 cents per pound. Currently, Honolulu residents pay an annual 7-cent-per pound levy on all commercial and passenger vehicles registered in the county.

Each county levies weight taxes on vehicles, but Honolulu's is the highest by a substantial amount. For passenger vehicles, Maui County's weight tax is 3.5 cents per pound, Kauai County's is 2 cents, and Hawaii County's is 1.75 cents.[1] Each county's weight tax is imposed in addition to the state's per-pound weight tax of 1.75 cents to 2.25 cents, a state highway beautification fee and a city vehicle registration fee.

For context, the owner of a 2019 Toyota Tacoma would pay about $310 annually for only Honolulu's weight tax. That would decrease to about $265 under this proposed legislation.

This measure will make transportation more affordable for Honolulu residents struggling with high gas prices. Saving $45 will not be a make or break most residents, but it will help mitigate the affordability crisis that most people deal with everyday.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Ted Kefalas
Director of Strategic Campaigns
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

[1] Daryl Huff, "Lawmakers moving to slash city vehicle tax by 75%," Hawaii News Now, April 14, 2026.

Amy Brown
Honolulu, HI 96816

August 12, 2026

Honolulu City Council
530 S King St
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Support Bill 47 (2026) – Motor Vehicle Weight Tax

Aloha Chair Waters, Vice Chair Tupola, and Council Members,

I support Bill 47 for the following reasons:

1) I speak for the many small business people in the contracting area driving large trucks to make a living – carpenters, electricians, masons, rock wall builders, painters, and so many more. They work hard and they need large vehicles to make a living. They have no pensions to speak of.

2) We've all seen motor vehicle tax dramatically increase, especially for trucks. It's time to go in the other direction to provide some monies in these never before seen times of huge cost increases in all areas of our lives.

3) Many local families drive these types of trucks for their space, comfort, and hauling capabilities.

4) This is one way to encourage those buying these types of trucks to feel a modicum of relief. It's time to help these people.

Thank you for your consideration,

Amy Brown

August 12, 2026

Trevor Nagamine
PO Box 37966
Honolulu, HI 96837
tnagamine.nb25@gmail.com

Councilmember Tommy Waters, Chair
Honolulu City Council
530 S. King St.
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Bill 47 (2026) — RELATING TO THE MOTOR VEHICLE WEIGHT TAX

Dear Chair Waters and Members of the City Council,

My name is Trevor Nagamine, and I am a resident of Mililani. I am also the Chair Pro Tem of Neighborhood Board No. 25 (Mililani/Waipio/Melemanu); however, I am submitting this testimony as an individual, and this testimony does not reflect an official position of Neighborhood Board No. 25. I am writing today to oppose Bill 47.

Bill 47 would compound the hugely inequitable decision to raise transit fares earlier this year from Bill 54 (2025), now Ordinance 26-1. That the City Council is considering a tax cut to those with the means to own a car, after choosing to take more money from people who depend on public transit (many of whom do not ride transit by choice) is unconscionable.

I respectfully ask that the City Council defer Bill 47. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Mahalo,

Trevor Nagamine

August 12, 2026

Trevor Nagamine
PO Box 37966
Honolulu, HI 96837
tnagamine.nb25@gmail.com

Councilmember Tommy Waters, Chair
Honolulu City Council
530 S. King St.
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Bill 47 (2026) — RELATING TO THE MOTOR VEHICLE WEIGHT TAX

Dear Chair Waters and Members of the City Council,

My name is Trevor Nagamine, and I am a resident of Mililani. I am also the Chair Pro Tem of Neighborhood Board No. 25 (Mililani/Waipio/Melemanu); however, I am submitting this testimony as an individual, and this testimony does not reflect an official position of Neighborhood Board No. 25. I am writing today to oppose Bill 47.

Bill 47 would compound the hugely inequitable decision to raise transit fares earlier this year from Bill 54 (2025), now Ordinance 26-1. That the City Council is considering a tax cut to those with the means to own a car, after choosing to take more money from people who depend on public transit (many of whom do not ride transit by choice) is unconscionable.

I respectfully ask that the City Council defer Bill 47. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Mahalo,

Trevor Nagamine