

Honorable Scott K. Saiki
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirtieth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2020
State of Hawaii
Sir:

Your Committee on Transportation, to which was referred H.B. No. 1950 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO AN UNDERWATER TUNNEL AND SUPPORTING ROADWAYS TO PROVIDE A MORE DIRECT CONNECTION BETWEEN EWA AND DOWNTOWN HONOLULU,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Require the Department of Transportation to conduct a study on the feasibility of a private-public partnership to design, build, and operate an underwater tunnel for vehicular traffic between Ewa and downtown Honolulu; and
- (2) Authorize the issuance of general obligation bonds and appropriate funds for the study.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from six individuals. Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from one individual. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Transportation.

Your Committee finds that the upcoming decades will bring tens of thousands of new homes to the leeward coast and nearby areas of west Oahu. Traffic experts predict that vehicular congestion will double or triple as a result of the growth in population. Completion of Honolulu's rail transit project, potential implementation of toll roads, and other traffic mitigation efforts, while helpful, will not be enough to provide the additional transportation capacity for west Oahu residents.

Your Committee further finds that an underwater tunnel constructed at an appropriate location will provide residents of the leeward coast with a much more direct route to downtown Honolulu, which will reduce travel time and save transportation expenses. This measure tasks the Department of Transportation with looking at the feasibility of constructing an underwater tunnel.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Replacing the general obligation bond authorization with a general fund appropriation of an unspecified amount;
- (2) Changing the effective date to July 1, 2050, to encourage further discussion; and
- (3) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Transportation that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 1950, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1950, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Finance.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the members of the Committee on Transportation,

HENRY J.C. AQUINO, Chair