



CITY COUNCIL
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-3065 / TELEPHONE 547-7000

TOM BERG
COUNCILMEMBER
HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL • DISTRICT I
EWA BEACH, KAPOLEI, NANAKULI, WAIANAE
PH: (808) 768-5001
FAX: (808) 768-5011
EMAIL: tberg@honolulu.gov
WEBSITE: www.councilmanberg.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: (808) 753-7324

RESOLUTIONS TO RESTORE BUS CUTS PASS UNANIMOUSLY

City Councilman Tom Berg Urges Passage of City Bus Service Resolutions

Resolution 12-173, introduced by Councilman Tom Berg and Chair Ernie Martin, urges the Mayor to find funding in the City budget to restore bus service cuts to numerous rural routes. Resolution 12-177 also introduced by Councilmember Berg and Chair Martin urges the temporary suspension of the fare box recovery for FY 2013 and uses this policy suspension period to restore and maintain the current level of bus services provided to riders prior to the June 3, 2012 service change.

Bus service changes are negatively impacting all bus riders around the island, especially riders in rural communities who are especially hard-hit because of the significant reduction of viable alternatives now that bus service changes have gone into effect. These changes are creating hardships that have effectively eliminated public transportation as a means of commuting and forcing many previous bus riders into cars.

The City Council and Councilman Tom Berg's district have received messages by phone, fax, email and various petitions from upset bus riders regarding the already-instituted and additional upcoming bus service changes. The service changes for TheBus that modified routes, reduced services, lengthened wait times, and/or eliminated routes entirely for thirteen different bus routes, including the following rural routes: Route 55 (Kaneohe—Circle Island); Route 65 (Kahaluu—Honolulu); Route 52 (Wahiawa—Circle Island); Route C (Country Express Makaha to Honolulu); and Route E (Country Express Ewa Beach to Waikiki).

The City bus system benefits residents and visitors alike by increasing public mobility, lessening traffic congestion by diverting people from cars, reducing emissions and pollutants associated with vehicular travel, and decreasing the demand for limited on and off-street parking. This is a primary core service function of the City government. These cuts are taking place as HART and the rail continue to receive generous funding for downtown offices and public relations while still many years away from any form of operational transit service. The Oahu public doesn't seem to believe that HART deserves to have top funding and highest priority over all other government services.

The City bus system is heavily patronized as evidenced by the following statistics reported by the Department of Transportation Services: actual passenger boardings of 70.5 million in fiscal year 2011, 71.2 million in fiscal year 2010 and projected ridership of 71.9 million in fiscal year 2013.

Enclosures: Resolution 12-173 and Resolution 12-177 ###



RESOLUTION

URGING THE MAYOR TO FIND FUNDING IN THE CITY BUDGET TO RESTORE SERVICE CUTS INSTITUTED TO BUS ROUTES 55, 65 AND OTHER RURAL BUS ROUTES.

WHEREAS, on June 3, 2012, the Department of Transportation Services (DTS) instituted service changes for TheBus that modified routes, reduced services, lengthened wait times, and/or eliminated routes entirely for thirteen different bus routes, including the following rural routes:

- Route 55 (Kaneohe—Circle Island);
- Route 65 (Kahaluu—Honolulu);
- Route 52 (Wahiawa—Circle Island);
- Route C (Country Express Makaha to Honolulu); and
- Route E (Country Express Ewa Beach to Waikiki);

and

WHEREAS, these changes, and additional changes scheduled to take effect on August 19, 2012, are supposedly designed to make better use of limited transportation funds by tailoring service to actual usage, reduce operating expenses that are projected to increase by \$7 million, and avoid the need to raise fares while maintaining acceptable service; and

WHEREAS, while service changes are negatively impacting all bus riders around the island, riders in rural communities are especially hard-hit because of the significant reduction of viable alternatives now that the changes have been instituted, creating hardships that have effectively eliminated public transportation as a means of commuting and forcing many previous bus riders into cars; and

WHEREAS, the DTS director has testified against Resolution 12-66, which seeks to amend City policy regarding the bus fare ratio and allow for fare increases as a tool to address rising costs, stating that he was concerned about the economic impact on bus riders if fares would be increased; and

WHEREAS, eliminating the option of increasing fares when faced with expected increases in operating costs leaves only one other viable option—reducing bus services; and

WHEREAS, the Council has heard the uproar of bus riders over the already-instituted and additional upcoming service changes and does not believe that reducing



RESOLUTION

bus services has successfully precluded the need to raise fares while maintaining acceptable service; and

WHEREAS, the Council finds that DTS has lapsed operating funds of \$3 million in FY 2011 and \$5 million in FY 2010, so it remains unconvinced that the Department of Transportation Services has considered every option to fund bus operations in order to maintain the standard of service provided prior to the June service changes; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu that it urges the Mayor to find funding in the City budget to immediately restore service cuts instituted to bus routes 55, 65 and other rural bus routes; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council urges the Mayor to examine the sources of lapsed Department of Transportation Services funds in past fiscal years as one way to find funding to restore bus service cuts now; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council urges the Mayor, if sufficient funds can be found now, to restore bus services to all other affected routes, in addition to rural routes, and to cancel the planned service changes scheduled for August 19, 2012; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council urges the Mayor to seek federal funding, including rural assistance, Community Development Block Grant, and other federal funds, to help maintain the current level of bus services in the future; and



RESOLUTION

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the Managing Director, and the Director of Transportation Services.

INTRODUCED BY:

[Handwritten signature]

DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

JUL 11 2012
Honolulu, Hawaii

Councilmembers



RESOLUTION

SUSPENDING THE FAREBOX RECOVERY POLICY ON FUNDING THE OPERATING COSTS OF THE CITY BUS SYSTEM FOR FY 2013.

WHEREAS, the public transit system of the City and County of Honolulu is comprised of the bus system which provides regularly scheduled, fixed route service and the special transit service which provides paratransit services for persons with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the City bus system benefits residents and visitors alike by increasing public mobility, lessening traffic congestion by diverting people from cars, reducing emissions and pollutants associated with vehicular travel, and decreasing the demand for limited on- and off-street parking; and

WHEREAS, as an essential municipal service, the City bus system is heavily patronized as evidenced by the following statistics reported by the Department of Transportation Services: actual passenger boardings of 70.5 million in fiscal year 2011, 71.2 million in fiscal year 2010 and projected ridership of 71.9 million in fiscal year 2013; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Resolution 00-29, the fare box recovery ratio, which is the ratio of bus fare revenues to operating cost, was established to be not less than 27 percent and not more than 33 percent; and

WHEREAS, because of the uncertainty of the status of continuing federal subsidies for the bus system and the increasing costs of providing bus services, including rising fuel and labor costs, the Council finds that it is necessary to temporarily suspend the fare box recovery ratio; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu that the farebox recovery policy relating to funding the annual operating cost of the City bus system, excluding special transit service and debt service, as established by Resolution 00-29, CD1, is hereby suspended for FY 2013; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council urges the Department of Transportation Services to use this policy suspension period to restore and maintain the current level of bus services provided to riders prior to the June 3, 2012 service changes; and



RESOLUTION

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution shall sunset on July 1, 2013 and that the farebox recovery policy provided in Resolution 00-29, CD1 shall be restored in effect on July 1, 2013; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the Managing Director, and the Director of Transportation Services.

INTRODUCED BY:

TOM BERG
7/18/12

DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

JUL 18 2012
Honolulu, Hawaii

Councilmembers