Testimony Presented Before the

House Committee on Finance
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By
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HCR 153/HR 115 – CONVENING A MANOA ROAD TASK FORCE TO DISCUSS
OWNERSHIP, MAINTENANCE, AND REPAIR RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PORTION OF
MANOA ROAD LEADING UP TO THE LYON ARBORETUM.

Chair Oshiro, Vice Chair Lee and members of the Finance Committee, thank you for this
opportunity to provide testimony expressing our support for HCR 153 and HR 115, which calls
for convening a Mānoa Road Task Force to discuss ownership, maintenance and repair
responsibility for the portion of Mānoa Road leading up to the Lyon Arboretum.

Although these resolutions address several issues with Mānoa Road, including ownership and
vegetation management, our immediate concern relates to the portion of Mānoa Road that
extends from the entrance to the old Paradise Park to the entrance to Lyon Arboretum. This road
is badly deteriorated and poses a major safety concern for motorists and the many pedestrians in
the area. The fact that this roadway is very heavily utilized adds to the compelling need to
resolve its ownership, maintenance and repair responsibility.

Nearly 50,000 persons visit the Lyon Arboretum each year, many of whom are schoolchildren
who learn valuable lessons at our 200-acre facility about the care of the ‘āina and conservation of
endangered native plants. We also host popular public tours and volunteer activities at the
Arboretum. All programs, and community access, are at risk if participants cannot access the
Lyon Arboretum on a safe roadway.

This road is also the access point to the popular Stated-owned Mānoa Falls trail – creating very
heavy pedestrian use of the narrow road by recreational hikers, visiting tourists, and school
groups. In addition, there is frequent use of the road by City emergency vehicles on the many
occasions when assistance is needed by hikers in distress and by large school buses transporting
students to the Arboretum. The mix of many pedestrians and drivers maneuvering on the
pothole-riddled road, along with encroaching vegetation, creates safety concerns.

The University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa has discussed this issue with the Honolulu Mayor,
Governor’s office, and area legislators at the State and City levels. While there is agreement on
the need to determine a responsible entity, there is no unanimous agreement on identifying that
entity. For these reasons, we strongly support the need for a multi-level task force to consider
permanent solutions to resolve this issue, including legislation if necessary.