



STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY GROUP MEETING #3

October 4, 2019 | Meeting Summary

State Capitol, Room 225

ATTENDEES

Stakeholder Advisory Group Members

By phone:

Marianne Kim, AAA Coalition of Hawaii
Steve Hunt, Hawaii County
Mike Busch, Maui County
Reiko Matsuyama, Kauai County
Travis Dunn, D'Artagnan Consulting

Tom Yamachika, Tax Foundation
Kenji Takahashi, Hawaii Transportation Association
Noreen Reimel, Blue Planet Foundation

HDOT Staff

Scot Urada

In person:

Senator Lorraine Inouye
Representative Henry Aquino
Damien Elefante, DoTax
Sydney Hart, Senator Inouye's Office
Hayden Burgess, Hawaiian Perspectives

HiRUC Project Team Support Staff

Ging Ging Fernandez, D'Artagnan Consulting
Anneliese Gill, D'Artagnan Consulting
Lisa Konove, Pineapple Tweed
Lani Nakazawa, Spire Hawaii
Barbara Hastings, Hastings & Pleadwell

NOTE: What follows is primarily a summary of the discussion that followed the presentations. Questions and comments are in *italics*.

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Scot Urada called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. He reported that quite a bit of work has been done since the group last met and that the project team is getting ready for the issuance of the Driving Report and next week's workshop.

SUMMARY OF HiRUC OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

After self-introductions by the attendees, progress on the project's outreach activities was provided by Barbara Hastings. She reported that 14 town hall meetings were held around the State, and that other meetings were held around those meetings. The goal of the outreach was to enhance familiarity with the project. An additional message in the outreach was for people to go to the website. Ms. Hastings stated that information has been gathered through the meetings and focus groups to inform the message and outreach. She noted that since the initial coverage, media coverage has been favorable and that a list of media coverage would be emailed to AG members. In addition to the media coverage, meetings have been

held with Rotary clubs all over the State, chambers of commerce and government officials on every island except Oahu. She asked for suggestions for groups to reach out to. The project communications team is also looking to increase online and social media outreach and other means of publicity, such as car shows and posters at inspection stations and DMV locations.

Discussion

Senator Inouye suggested that customer lounges for car service businesses might be a good place to provide consumer information, since the lounges have televisions where videos could be run. Ms. Fernandez stated that the animated videos were being updated and could be provided to these businesses.

Ms. Kim offered that AAA customer service desks could be used to provide printed material. She also stated that AAA has worked with highway patrols in other states to provide information about changes in laws, and that might be an additional way to provide information to drivers. Mr. Urada thanked her for the offer.

UPCOMING DRIVING REPORTS AND TECHNOLOGY TEST DRIVE

Ms. Fernandez explained that the next phase of the project is the pilot, including issuance of the Driving Report. The Driving Report will reach at least half of the 1.1 million drivers in the State by the end of the 12-month period. She reported that the Driving Report was developed by a design firm and was based on input about format and content from surveys and observations of vehicle owners of different demographics on the Big Island and Oahu. She reviewed the envelope and the mailer (report) and explained how the design and content were developed to get recipients to open the envelope, skim the mailer, get to the personalized Driving Report, and understand that this is a study of a replacement for the gas tax, and not a new tax.

Ms. Fernandez reported that in addition to the website there is a Help Desk line that will proactively help with the communications. She directed the AG to the PowerPoint for information about the technology choices for the Technology Test Drive.

Discussion

Ms. Hart asked whether there was anything in the mailer stated that “this is not a bill”? Ms. Fernandez stated no, but there will be opportunities to change the mailer after analyzing the results a month after the initial reports are issued.

Senator Inouye commented that when there are many words (in the mailer), the print must be large enough to read. Ms. Fernandez said the font sizes would be checked.

Mr. Yamachika stated that at a glance, the mailer seems to say that “I’m gonna be hosed,” and that for right now, there seems to be a motivation to oppose. Mr. Yamachika inquired about the parameters for the rate. Ms. Fernandez stated that the formula was intended to provide the same amount as the current gas tax revenue, that is, be revenue neutral. Mr. Urada noted that the car used in the example was fuel efficient, and that is why more RUC will be paid (than gas tax). Mr. Yamachika asked whether there was any assurance from elected officials that the RUC will be revenue neutral, and not used to raise more revenues. Mr. Yamachika expressed a concern whether the public may be deceived. Mr. Urada states that the RUC is a different method of collection, and (the need for) raising revenues is a different conversation. Mr. Yamachika asked whether this is stated in the mailer. Mr. Urada says that there have been discussions on

this topic in the presentations, but none in the mailer. He suggested that this version of the mailer could be issued, and if there are concerns, there are opportunities to modify.

Representative Aquino asked what is being said about this being research and a replacement of the gas tax. Ms. Fernandez read from two paragraphs in the mailer (PowerPoint page 12) that were intended to address these subjects. She encouraged participants to bring their license plate information to next week's workshops so they could get information specific to their vehicles.

Mr. Burgess said that he had three comments: (1) what is the level of the reading ability of the audience, (2) the language sounds like a lecture, and might be more interesting if it were a dialogue and (3) pidgin English might be incorporated to create more interest and communication. Ms. Fernandez acknowledged the comment and stated that there are opportunities to revise the mailer.

Senator Inouye suggested creating another piece or having a video incorporating pidgin. Mr. Urada said that incorporating pidgin into the video is a good idea. Mr. Burgess stated that when using pidgin, you need to be careful so that people would not feel like you are talking down to them.

Mr. Hunt asked that in order to get numbers closer to individual neutrality rather than overall neutrality, might it be possible to get mileage and weight factors involved? He asked whether the message we want to send that SUVs and heavy vehicles will pay less than more efficient vehicles. Mr. Urada said that the point has come up, but they are trying to keep those issues separate, not to complicate the discussion, and trying just to look at miles. Ms. Kim says that the issue has come up in other high cost jurisdictions like Hawaii, but that there are still incentives to purchase fuel efficient vehicles. She stated that consumers are savvy enough to make that analysis.

Ms. Reimel asked whether personal information must be provided. Ms. Fernandez said no, because a discrete survey code will be used, which can be used to correlate to specific vehicles.

Mr. Burgess noted that the discussion is about whether people will want to pay, but that might be misplaced, because concerns about fairness and the environment might be greater than whether more will be paid. He feels that communication needs to be elevated to these two concerns, because what will move people to participate in something worthy is the higher motivator. Mr. Dunn stated that messaging is a delicate balancing act. He stated that the comments about incorporating different language were good, and that the messaging is about getting more dialogue. (For example) the intent of the survey is to start with basic information, and towards the middle to the end of the survey policy choices start to be introduced.

Senator Inouye asked whether the vehicle must be on Oahu to participate in the pilot. Ms. Fernandez explained that the car can be on other islands. Senator Inouye expressed an interest in having her work car involved. In response to questions, Mr. Urada and Ms. Fernandez explained that the 500 people who are signed up for the newsletter and others from the community meetings who expressed an interest will be the base for the 2,000 volunteer participants in the pilot.

HAWAII ROAD USAGE CHARGE OCTOBER 10TH WORKSHOP

Mr. Urada reported that a workshop will be held on October 10 and 11. The October 10 workshop is a peer-to-peer forum, involving legislators from other states, engineers and other technical resources such as project managers and transportation commissioners from other states. The October 11 session is for networking discussions around key topics. He encouraged AG members to attend.

Discussion

Senator Inouye recommended asking 'Ōlelo to broadcast the sessions in order to provide more information to the public. The project team said that recording either through 'Ōlelo or video recordings made by the project would be explored. Mr. Urada noted that participants might be concerned about the workshop being broadcasted. After a discussion about how broadcasting would help outreach and whether public notice and access are required, the project team stated that although the workshop was not initially planned as a public forum, it would check on those issues.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 p.m.