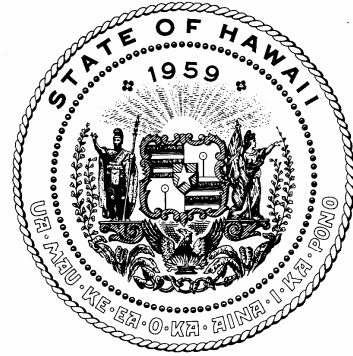


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MEDIA RELEASE
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SENATOR WILL ESPERO SELECTED AS NEW CHAIRMAN OF OAHU METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Senator Will Espero has been selected as the new Chairman of the Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization (OMPO). Senator Espero was the Vice-Chair of OMPO, and succeeds outgoing chair Nestor Garcia of the Honolulu City Council.

Transportation is a primary concern of Senator Espero, a long time member of OMPO, and a member of the Hawaii State Senate's Transportation Committee. Senator Espero has been a strong advocate of expanding our transportation infrastructure to relieve gridlock for the growing population of the Leeward coast.

"I'm excited about the challenges and opportunities we have for improving conditions here on Oahu," Senator Espero said. "The City's new focus on transit oriented development, new funding for more bike paths, and the rail project are just some of the ways we will be helping island residents get from here to there with a smile." He is especially upbeat about the rail project, having returned from Shanghai, China, where he rode on the only commercial magnetic levitation commuter system in

the world. Serving Shanghai, China's largest city, with a population of over 20 million, the rail system was convenient, efficient and a pleasure to ride.

OMPO is responsible for identifying Oahu's future transportation needs and programming the federal funding for such projects and programs. This directive is accomplished through continual development of the Oahu Regional Transportation Plan, the Overall Work Plan, and the Transportation Improvement Plan.

Federal law requires urban areas with a population greater than 50,000 to have an MPO to ensure that existing and future expenditures for transportation projects and programs are based on comprehensive, cooperative and continuing ("3-C") planning. Federal transportation funding is channeled through this planning process.

OMPO is composed of a policy committee, technical advisory committee, and citizen advisory committee. The City and State transportation departments participate in OMPO. OMPO does not construct projects or implement programs but coordinates transportation planning for the island of Oahu. The bulk of the planning, as well as project construction and program implementation, are done by the City and State departments.

END