



# CITY COUNCIL

## CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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### **Charles K. Djou**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### COUNCILMEMBER DJOU: GOVERNMENT SHOULD PAY ITS FAIR SHARE FOR PARKING

Today Honolulu City Councilmember Charles K. Djou (Waikiki, East Honolulu) introduced legislation to peg the parking rate for the City's downtown municipal parking rate to a monthly bus pass rates.

Last month, a new study showed that downtown Honolulu has some of the highest parking rates in the nation. The average unreserved parking stall in Honolulu costs about \$200/month and a reserved stall can cost upwards of \$300/month. The City's downtown parking lot on Alapai and Beretania Streets, however, charges a mere \$35/month for an unreserved stall and \$50/month for a reserved parking stall. A monthly bus pass, however, is \$40/month.

"While the City foisted a massive tax increase for a rail system and is making a big push for mass transit, there is no reason for the taxpayers to subsidize parking in downtown for government workers. It is unreasonable for the City to charge less for a monthly parking stall in downtown Honolulu than it charges the average citizen for a monthly bus pass. That's why I am again pushing legislation to peg the City's parking lot rates to the monthly bus pass rate," stated Councilmember Djou. "Even if my legislation passes, parking for City government officials in downtown will still be a good deal, it just won't be a rip-off on taxpayers."

Councilmember Djou introduced legislation to pegs the unreserved parking rate at the City municipal lot to 1.75 times a monthly bus pass or about \$70/month, up from the current \$35/month. A reserved parking stall at the City lot would be 2.25 times a monthly bus pass or about \$90/month, up from the current \$50/month. These rates would still make parking at the City's municipal lot less than half what is charged by the market. Djou's proposal also offers to use the additional revenue generated by the higher parking rate to provide free monthly bus passes to City government workers.

Councilmember Djou had introduced similar legislation in 2003. His previous measure was defeated after intense opposition and lobbying by the Hawaii Government Workers

Association. The City and County of Honolulu is the second largest employer in downtown Honolulu after the state government.

On January 1<sup>st</sup> of this year, the City started collecting a 0.5% increase in the general excise tax for a mass transit system which is estimated to cost the average Oahu family \$450/year. The mass transit system was partially adopted as a public policy by the City to reduce Honolulu's dependence on the automobile and the need for parking.

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