

Honolulu's Mayor recognizes the need to provide alternatives if you want to move people from cars; he also called any congestion charge a the tax on driving a car, which we know that it is.

<http://starbulletin.com/2008/07/02/news/story12.html>



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Mayor vows to veto congestion-fee idea **Councilman Djou, who proposed the measure, says it is worth study**

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Mayor Mufi Hannemann said yesterday he would reject a measure under consideration by the City Council that would charge Oahu motorists a fee to drive into downtown Honolulu.

At a news conference yesterday, Hannemann said he would veto the measure introduced by Councilman Charles Djou because there aren't many alternatives for Oahu motorists.

"Charles Djou is wrong and I will veto that measure if it comes to my desk," Hannemann said. "You cannot do congestion pricing when you have not provided enough options or opportunities for people to travel in and out of the city. This is the wrong time to broach it."

Last week, a City Council committee expressed support for a resolution urging the city Transportation Services Department to study congestion pricing, a practice used in London to reduce traffic congestion by charging drivers when they enter certain portions of its downtown areas. Because it's a resolution, Hannemann would not have to veto it but could tell city transportation officials to ignore the order.

Djou, who is against the city's proposed rail system and a frequent critic of Hannemann, said he supports at least studying congestion pricing to see whether it could work in Honolulu.

"I'm not sure congestion pricing is a good idea," Djou said. "I'm saying it's worth serious consideration to study it and I'm disappointed with what the mayor said."

Hannemann also criticized Djou for suggesting charging motorists an additional fee, because Djou has spoken against raising taxes.

"I find it also amazing for someone who's against rail because of the tax increase now wants to impose a tax on people using their cars," Hannemann said.

Wayne Yoshioka, the city's transportation director, testified in front of a City Council committee that the study could take up to two years and estimated it could cost as much as \$500,000.

"Why study something when we already know the answer?" said Hannemann, reiterating his support for a planned \$4 billion rail transit system. "Let's save the dollars so we can use it for other things."

The City Council Transportation and Public Works Committee might consider the resolution next month, with Yoshioka to report back on more precise estimates on the study's cost.