

Wednesday, February 29th, 2012

## **Kapolei Transportation Panel Riles Rail Advocates**

Last night at Kapolei Hale, city hall's branch in West Oahu, an all-star panel brought to Hawaii by the Small Business Hawaii Education Foundation and the American Dream Coalition made a presentation on rail and solutions to traffic congestion on Oahu.

But an estimated 300 rail supporters, many holding 'Go Rail Go' banners, did their best to make sure the event did not go on – at least not peacefully.

After lining up their tractors and trucks on both sides of the street leading up to Kapolei Hale, they chanted loudly in support of the rail.

They demanded to "Take Politics Out of Rail", to let the project move forward and to "Go Rail Go." They criticized the speakers for being from the mainland, although there were local speakers too. Maeda Timson, a member of *Go Rail Go*, told [Hawaii News Now](#): "Now we have these mainland folks who are professional anti-rail critics who come from throughout the United States and talk about rail. They don't know us. They don't live in our community." Timson was promoted to vice president of First Hawaiian Bank last year by Don Horner, who is now chairman of First Hawaiian Bank as well as the chair of the city's Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transit Board.

One attendee told *Hawaii Reporter* the *Go Rail Go* protesters "looked like a gang looking for a street fight, chanting and sounding ominous" adding "The bullies heckled the first couple of speakers, but after John Charles, the bravery wilted to stark silence and laughs from the audience watching Portland, Oregon's 25-year history of rail and Transit Oriented Development. University of Hawaii Law Professor Randall Roth gave a stirring closing, and he literally awed the audience with specifics of how and why the political leaders are being irresponsible, another 'Broken Trust.'

The clash led radio talk show host Rick Hamada of *KHVV News Radio* to invite the *Go Rail Go* spokespeople to come on his show and debate the anti rail/pro transportation alternative advocates on his radio program to debate facts and figures, rather than force and disruption. Those who missed last night's presentation will have another chance to catch it today. John Charles of the Cascade Policy Institute, Wendell Cox of Demographia, Adrian Moore of the Reason Public Policy Institute, and Randal O'Toole of Cato Institute will join Hawaii experts including University of Hawaii Law professor Randall Roth, University of Hawaii Engineering Professor Panos Prevedouros and Architect Peter Vincent today from 12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Mission Memorial Auditorium.

Specifically the event includes:

**12:30 to 2:15 PM – CHALLENGES**

*Panos Prevedouros: Moderator*

*John Charles: Transit Oriented Development Costs and Benefits*

*Panos Prevedouros: Agriculture, Energy and Resilience Challenges*

*Wendell Cox: Paying the Bills: Prioritizing Honolulu's Fiscal Challenges*

**2:30 to 4:00 PM – SOLUTIONS**

*Randall Roth: Moderator*

*Adrian Moore: HOT Lanes for Corridor Congestion*

*Peter Vincent: Infrastructure Development and Oahu's Aesthetic Appeal*

*Randal O'Toole: Urban Sprawl and Community Development*

*Randall Roth: Closing Remarks*

There is no charge for the public to attend the event.