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October 1, 2013

SENATOR DANIEL K. INOUE HONORED FOR HIS WORK ON HONOLULU'S RAIL TRANSIT PROJECT

U.S. Senator Daniel K. Inouye was honored today by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) for his efforts in championing the Honolulu rail transit project.

Inouye, who passed away last year and represented Hawaii in the U.S. Senate for 50 years, was selected as the recipient of the APTA 2013 Distinguished Service Award at the organization's annual meeting in Chicago.

APTA selected Inouye for his tireless efforts "to improve mobility and seek transportation solutions for Hawaii's residents and visitors." Accepting the APTA award on the Senator's behalf were his former chief of staff Jennifer Sabas, Honolulu Mayor Kirk Caldwell, and Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation (HART) Executive Director and CEO Daniel A. Grabauskas.

Inouye was influential in securing federal funding for the Honolulu rail project. He passed away on December 17, 2012, two days before the City and County of Honolulu and the Federal Transit Administration signed a historic Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA). The FFGA secures \$1.55 billion in federal funding for the construction of Honolulu's rail transit system.

"He worked to build critical roads, modernized airports, expanded bus service, obtained infrastructure funding and most recently with the Obama administration and Federal Transit Administration to secure federal funding for the Honolulu rail transit project," said the APTA awards committee in nominating Senator Inouye for the prestigious award.

Grabauskas said it was Senator Inouye's persistence and visionary leadership that kept the promise of rail moving forward.

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“Senator Inouye was one of the greatest champions of public transit and would be gratified by this Distinguished Service Award,” Grabauskas said. “Because of his tireless efforts as Hawaii’s senior senator, the Honolulu rail transit project will bring transit options and relief to thousands of Oahu commuters and create a state-of-the-art transportation system that future generations can benefit from.”

The 20-mile Honolulu rail transit system will be the first driverless light metro rail system in the United States, running from East Kapolei to Ala Moana Center. Mayor Caldwell said it was Senator Inouye’s long-term vision for Oahu that made construction of the rail project possible.

“I have worked with Senator Inouye for many years and can attest to his tenacity, vision, dedication, and commitment in ensuring that Oahu builds the best, safest, and most reliable public transportation system,” Caldwell said. “For decades, Senator Inouye was a staunch and compassionate advocate of public transportation on behalf of the people of Hawaii. He was a man of vision, believing in our future, and was a true public servant, giving his time, energy and goodwill to delivering transportation benefits that have benefited generations of our island residents.”

In addition to his invaluable contributions to the Honolulu rail project, Inouye as a ranking member of the U.S. Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation committees helped introduce an authorization bill (2006 Maritime, Rail and Public Transportation Security Act) that provided \$3.5 billion for transit security, and combined transit, port, cargo and rail security provisions. He also co-sponsored several important rail-related measures, including the 2008 Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act.

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Caption for attached photo: The late U.S. Sen. Daniel K. Inouye was named the recipient of the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) 2013 Distinguished Service Award for his efforts in championing the Honolulu rail transit project. Accepting the award today on Inouye’s behalf at APTA’s annual conference in Chicago were (left to right) Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation (HART) Executive Director and CEO Daniel A. Grabauskas; Honolulu Mayor Kirk Caldwell; and Jennifer Sabas, former chief of staff for Sen. Inouye. Presenting the award was Chris Boylan with the General Contractors Association of New York (far right).