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**Subject:** Article on Honolulu -

An "interesting" article on Honolulu came out last Friday 7/25/08.

### **Honolulu mayor backs letting voters decide on rail**

Associated Press (7/25/08)

Mayor Mufi Hannemann, accepting a detour from his plan to fast-track a \$3.7 billion Oahu rail transit system, on Thursday supported letting voters decide whether the city should proceed with the project.

Hannemann said he also backs having voters determine whether a transit authority should be created to oversee design, construction and operation of the 20-mile system linking East Kapolei and Ala Moana.

"I would endorse language that would put the Public Transit Authority and the overall question of whether to proceed with rail transit together," Hannemann said. "This is the clearest and most sensible way to present this issue to voters."

Two approaches for resolving the transit issue have emerged from the City Council as amendments to the City Charter. Either would be an alternative to a Stop Rail Now effort to gather signatures for an election initiative, which has been rejected by the city clerk for November.

Councilman Charles Djou proposes separate charter amendments on the rail question and the transit authority.

On Thursday, Councilman Todd Apo submitted his version of a charter amendment that combines the two proposals: "Shall the revised City Charter be amended to implement a rail mass transit system and create a semiautonomous public transit authority responsible for the planning, construction, operation, maintenance and expansion of such mass transit system?"

"I remain of the firm belief that our island, and especially West Oahu, needs and deserves a mass transit solution to the hours that our residents spend sitting in their cars," Apo said. "Representing West Oahu, our residents need a significant solution to the growing traffic."

Proposed charter amendments must be approved by the City Council before Sept. 5 to go on the Nov. 4 general election ballot.

Djou's first proposal to amend the charter to proceed with the rail system passed the first of three readings in the council on Wednesday.

Hannemann's support is essential to the success of any charter amendment. As mayor, he has the power to veto any proposal approved by the council.

Meanwhile, the group Stop Rail Now said Thursday that it would take legal action if its anti-rail initiative proposal doesn't appear on the general election ballot.

Stop Rail Now disagrees with a decision by City Clerk Denise De Costa that

the proposal can't go on the ballot because the group missed a deadline for submitting petition signatures. The group said it will continue with its plan to submit the required number of signatures by Aug. 4.

"If the City Council, through the city clerk, refuses to accept the filing and place the issue on the ballot when the petition is presented the week after next," Stop Rail Now attorney Earl Partington said, "we will be filing suit to compel the city clerk to put the issue on the ballot."