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Sent:	4/23/2009 6:02:57 AM
Subject:	Updated: Cong call w/ Rep. Abercrombie's office to discuss Honolulu rail project

When: Thursday, April 23, 2009 2:30 PM-3:00 PM (GMT-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada).
Where: Small TOA conf rm - call in #866-801-0960, participant code 3913012

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Rep. Abercrombie's staff has requested a conference call on Thursday 4/23 to discuss the status of the Honolulu rail project. Points they would like to discuss at the briefing include:

As you know, the EPA has recently submitted a letter questioning why alternatives to an elevated rail line, such as light rail at street level and bus rapid transit, weren't evaluated in the project's environmental impact study. Would EPA's questioning of the EIS process possibly impact the timeline of the project?

Does the FTA EIS process allow for amendments by the C&C of Honolulu during the consideration?

What standing does the EPA have in the EIS process? Since it's a federal agency do their views rank higher?

Is the proposed cost of an elevated rail system in Honolulu more, less, or equal to the cost per mile of other systems currently under consideration by the FTA? It has been suggested that the elevated Honolulu system is 8 times the cost of other pending rail projects. Could the DEIS be rejected outright or would it be sent back to the C&C of Honolulu for amendment? What is the time frame for the EIS process?