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Write a Letter to the Editor

Undercover jaywalker busters? Oh, please!

It's amazing how many ways our city finds to waste resources and yet never address or solve the problem. The latest example is your [April 5 front-page story](#) on undercover jay-walker cops; the Honolulu Police Department now has a "pedestrian safety task force." How amusing.

I understand from a friend driving around Kapiolani Park the other day that a cop pulled her over to issue a warning about speeding (31 mph) around the park because they are concerned about pedestrian safety in the area. Downtown Honolulu, same story: Undercover officers cite taxpayers while they go about their daily routines.

Kapiolani Park? Downtown Honolulu? How many traffic fatalities have we had in either of these areas this year? If you are going to blow tax dollars on pedestrian safety, station uniformed officers every quarter-mile of Farrington Highway from Nanakuli to Makaha, put some on Liliha and School streets -- or better yet, start to build more pedestrian over- and underpasses.

This is all too reminiscent of the "speeding enforcement task force" that again pitted your everyday working commuter against laser-equipped cops stationed on the H-1 during rush hour. What? Speeding during rush hour is mutually exclusive, yet I saw it with my own eyes, cars being pulled over before the 6th Avenue exit for doing what, 56 mph? Be real, chief, mayor and all other bandwagon legislators. The difference between trying to teach traffic habits to drivers who supposedly have passed drivers' tests and should know the laws, and revenue enhancement is easily identifiable.

I realize it is a cliché, but spend some money where it is needed -- busting ice dealers, murderers or just the copper thieves.

Ken Heflin
 Maunalani Heights

Water plant upgrade won't help environment

The Hawaii Water Environment Association is troubled by the recent Environmental Protection Agency decision that requires the City and County of Honolulu to upgrade its Honouliuli Wastewater Treatment Plant to secondary treatment.

News Alert

» Bob Nash named UH head basketball coach

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There is no scientific evidence that shows such an upgrade will improve water quality conditions, yet preliminary capital costs to comply with the decision are \$400 million. It doesn't seem justified for the city to raise wastewater bills (again) for plant upgrades when there is no scientific evidence that it will improve our livelihood in or around the ocean.

Our mayor is committed to improving the city's aging wastewater collection system to reduce overflows and spills. Improvements to our collection system will have a much stronger effect on maintaining a healthy environment and protecting our public health.

John H. Katahira
President, Hawaii Water Environment Association

All that sewage just a drop in the pool

Yeesh! I hate the thought of sewage being dumped into the ocean, but I guarantee you, every pool that I've been to in my life had somebody's pee in it, and I never got sick. I remember when untreated sewage used to be discharged at Sand Island and in Ewa. There used to be huge blooms of seaweed in the nearshore areas from the -- ahem -- fertilizer. My dad used to take me to go harvest ogo every weekend and let tell you, a little miso sauce and you couldn't taste anything wrong with it.

Your [April 2 editorial](#) says "the ocean cannot be treated as a giant toilet for much longer without adverse effects." Well, let's take things into perspective. Honolulu dumps -- excuse me, discharges -- about 100 million gallons of primarily treated sewage per day into the ocean. That's the equivalent of about 0.06 inches of rainfall over a single square mile of area. In the big picture, that's a drop in our bucket called the Pacific Ocean.

So it seems unfair to characterize the city as being uncaring of the ocean. After all, all of our wastewater is now treated (sob -- no more ogo!) to some degree before discharge. If studies indicate that the waters near the points of discharge show no ill effects, I have no problem with the city continuing to operate under a waiver. Just make sure your kid doesn't pee by me in the pool.

Lance Uchida
Honolulu

City manages sewage like a hostess bar

Who's killing the cat? Mayor Mufi Hannemann is screaming like a cat before the fight about the Environmental Protection Agency's mandate to go to secondary treatment for sewage. Sounds like a call for consulting firms to make big money at taxpayers' expense.

Soon the powers that be will be calling for sacrifices by privatizing, meaning employee layoffs, so they can wash clean the problems they have created and not fulfill the city's primary responsibility because of micro- and mismanagement.

This is also called hostess bar management -- hang the sign, change the name, all players the same.

There is no practical approach that the city has used to correct the problem but throw taxpayers' money at consultants and engineers.

The mayor cannot say, for the millions that were spent, if the wastewater system works as it should, without cost overruns or change orders no one is checking to safeguard the taxpayer. The mayor should call for an independent audit to keep his managers honest and ask the operators running the system for the truth.

Sidney Remiticado
Aiea

» Okuda melds fact, sci-fi for 'Trek' and NASA
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June Watanabe

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Gregg K. Kakesako

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Assault on parents also endangers child

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. When police charged Gerald Paakaula and his son with assault, they failed to also charge them with child endangerment. A 3-year-old child was placed in danger when his parents were pummeled. The removal of a parent's ability to provide care for a child is child abuse. In most states a violent act in front of a child in or near a vehicle is considered child endangerment.

It is a mother's natural instinct to defend and protect her child. If Dawn Dussell threw a punch, it could have been the desperate action of a mother trying to defend her child from a violent intruder. Most people might view the act of kicking car doors, banging on windows and screaming in front of a 3-year-old as a threatening act.

Shawn Parrish
Honolulu

Anti-GMO crowd perpetuates myths

The [April 5 article](#) on Monsanto's Kunia land purchase and seed farm expansion of 100 or more employees has set off the environmental scaremongers again. Paul Aচিতoff, lawyer for Earthjustice Legal Defense Fund, states that he is concerned for organic farmers.

Organic farmers need not be concerned about crossing, since crossing of varieties with corn pollen from different conventional varieties has been well controlled by timing of planting and distance. This is a proven procedure in corn production, and it can work with farmers growing organic corn.

If export crop sales are affected by genetically engineered crops, then the responsibility should be with those anti-GMO groups who perpetuate fear of genetically engineered crops with never any mention of reliable scientific evidence of harm to humans or the environment to back up their campaigns.

Perhaps Monsanto should express fear of organic crop contamination grown adjacent to it that have reduced disease (E. coli) and insect-control programs. And more urban environmentalists should take a course on corn pollination.

Don Gerbig
Lahaina, Maui

Is HandiVan schedule a harbinger of rail?

Riders of the federally funded HandiVan are offered marvelous door-to-door service: My ride from Aiea to the Pacific Beach Hotel took two hours and 40 minutes.

Dispatchers tell independent riders there are no pickups between 2 and 5 p.m. A dialysis patient who notified the dispatcher he would be late was termed a "no show." Too many of those and you are penalized. However, the HandiVan can be as late as 30 minutes for pickups.

Weekend pickups are every two hours. Rides must be reserved a day ahead; often dispatchers are scrambling at the last moment to fill "reservations."

These discrepancies are illegal under federal law. HandiVan Service must be comparable to public transportation available. TheBus runs often in the city and at least hourly in rural areas. However, many riders are too intimidated to complain or don't know they know their rights: After a half-hour wait, the client can demand a taxi.

Dispatchers follow what the administration tells them. There is a lack of drivers for the weekends and at peak times during the week.

Jason Genegabus

Weekly Eater

Nadine Kam

Hawaii's Back Yard

Cheryl Tsutsumi

Hit The Road

Joy Uyeno

Sidelines

Kalani Simpson

At The Masters

Paul Arnett

Water Ways

Ray Pendleton

Editorial Cartoon

Corky Trinidad

On Politics

Richard Borreca

Tools

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The city has already been sued twice for not following federal guidelines. If the City and County of Honolulu can not provide adequate basic transportation services, how can this government even consider a multibillion-dollar project, the proposed fixed-rail system that will make money for the insiders, create a crushing tax burden and will not solve our traffic problems. We were plundered by the Harris administration, and now ...?

Lela M. Hubbard
Aiea



STAR-BULLETIN / 2004
Voters -- and family members -- take their places in voting booths at the Windward Community College polling station.

Not so popular

Abandoning Electoral College will disenfranchise Hawaii

While I completely agree with Scott Smart's [April 5 letter](#) against Senate Bill 1956 ("Lawmakers shouldn't dump electoral votes"), he didn't fully explain why this was such an idiotic bill.

This bill would turn all of Hawaii's Electoral College votes over to whichever presidential candidate won the national popular vote -- which, given Hawaii's tiny population, would mean that our votes would virtually always go to whoever won on the mainland. Only four Democrats in the Legislature voted against this bill (Reps. Della Au Bellati, Lyla Berg, Joey Manahan and Angus McKelvey), even though in the most recent presidential election this bill would have given all four of our electoral votes to George Bush, despite John Kerry winning this state by a comfortable margin.

In fact, the only time Hawaii has voted for a Republican for president was during the 1984 landslide election, when Reagan won 49 states. If I were a Democrat, and the Democrat representing me voted to disenfranchise me by periodically handing over Hawaii's votes to a GOP presidential candidate who had lost the vote in Hawaii, I'd never vote for such a blithering idiot again.

Jim Henshaw
Kailua

Popular vote push is exercise in 'feel-good idiocy'

Attempting to circumvent the work of genius known as our Constitution by eliminating the Electoral College in presidential elections is a premier example of political Darwinism: Any benighted state with so stupid and ignorant a citizenry as to actually enact such feel-good idiocy into law richly deserves to be held in contempt and scornfully ignored by those who are elected. ("Bypassing of Electoral

College advances," [Star-Bulletin, April 3](#))

The Constitution was crafted with the deliberate purpose of retaining power in the hands of the governed by retaining it at sovereign state, local and individual levels to the extent possible, thus denying it to a federal government that might grow so powerful as to become tyrannical.

Allowing the ignoramus bumpkin and emotionally arrested element among us to tear down constitutional safeguards -- and, worse, because of a trivial spasm over the likes of Al Gore's witlessly having booted the 2000 election -- is prima facie evidence of the sorry state into which American public education has fallen. How terribly sad we have abandoned the teaching of history and civics.

Thomas E. Stuart
Kapaau, Hawaii

Popular-vote backers need civics course

I need to comment on John R. Koza's contention about a national vote ([Letters, April 6](#)). This could be done if in each of the 50 states, the state governments and state bodies were abolished. Then we would have a government similar to the Brits and the French.

Congress also would be changed since the members represent each of the 50 states -- two per state in the Senate and population-based in the House. This would mean eventually that the states with the highest-voting population determines the election.

Does Koza realize that each state merely votes in the presidential election to determine how their representatives in the Electoral College should vote?

Each state is a nation state in itself. Why is this called the United States of America, and each state has to be admitted to the union? Someone has failed to remember American Politics 101.

John Hardesty
U.S. expatriate
Blackheath, London
United Kingdom

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