

Fighting ● Boondoggles Honolulu ● Rail ● Transit

Panos D. Prevedouros ● PhD

Professor of Civil Engineering
University of Hawaii at Manoa



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Outline

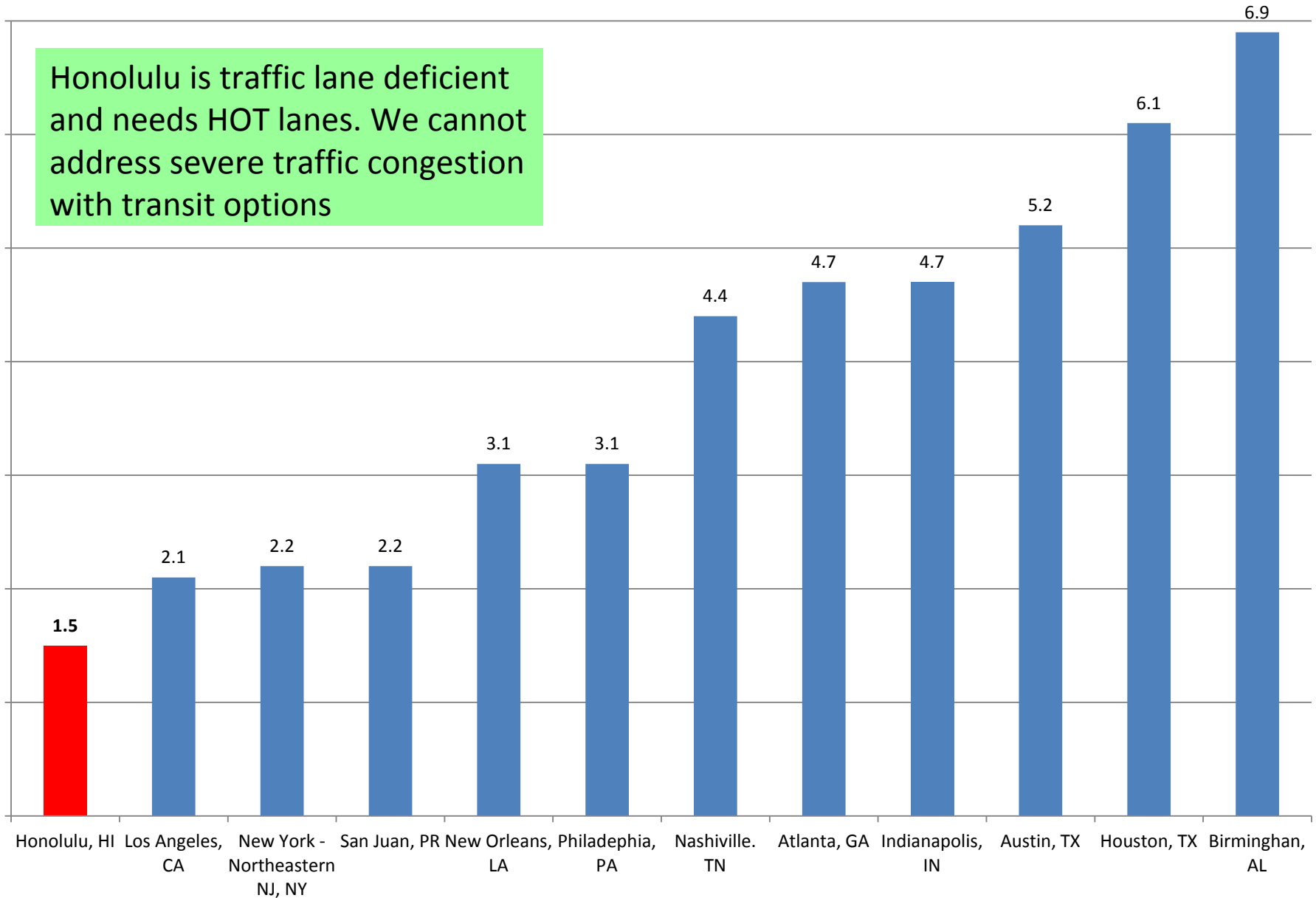
- Honolulu transit plans
- Why is Honolulu Rail a boondoggle?
- What was done to stop this train?

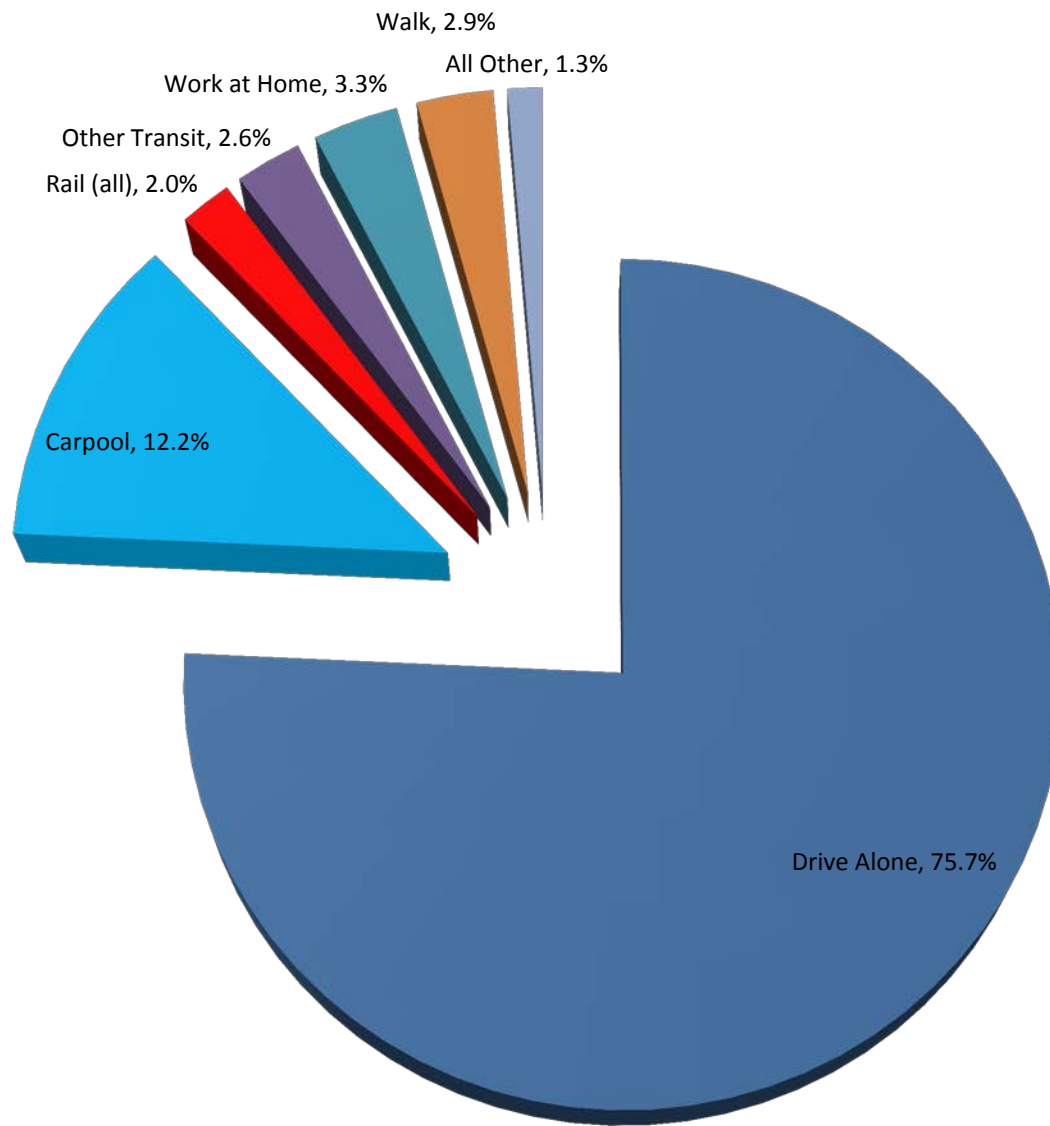
Honolulu's Billion Dollar Transit Plans

Transit Project	How Was It Defeated?
1. Post 1973-1974 oil embargo – about 12 miles of heavy rail	1. Pro-rail mayor Fasi was defeated by Texas transplant Anderson
2. 1991 – about 15 miles of heavy rail	2. County tax plan collapses with Council voted 4 to 5
3. 2001 – about 30 miles of regional and in-town BRT	3. Mayor Harris started work before FFGA, FTA revoked ROD
4. 2006-now – 20 to 34 miles of heavy rail	4. 13 month stoppage by local suit; NEPA suit now in District Court (San Francisco.)

Miles of Roadway Per 1,000 Persons

Honolulu is traffic lane deficient and needs HOT lanes. We cannot address severe traffic congestion with transit options





Rail's Minuscule Contribution to Urban Commuting

UC professor Charles Lave insisted on observing the “Law of Large Proportions.”

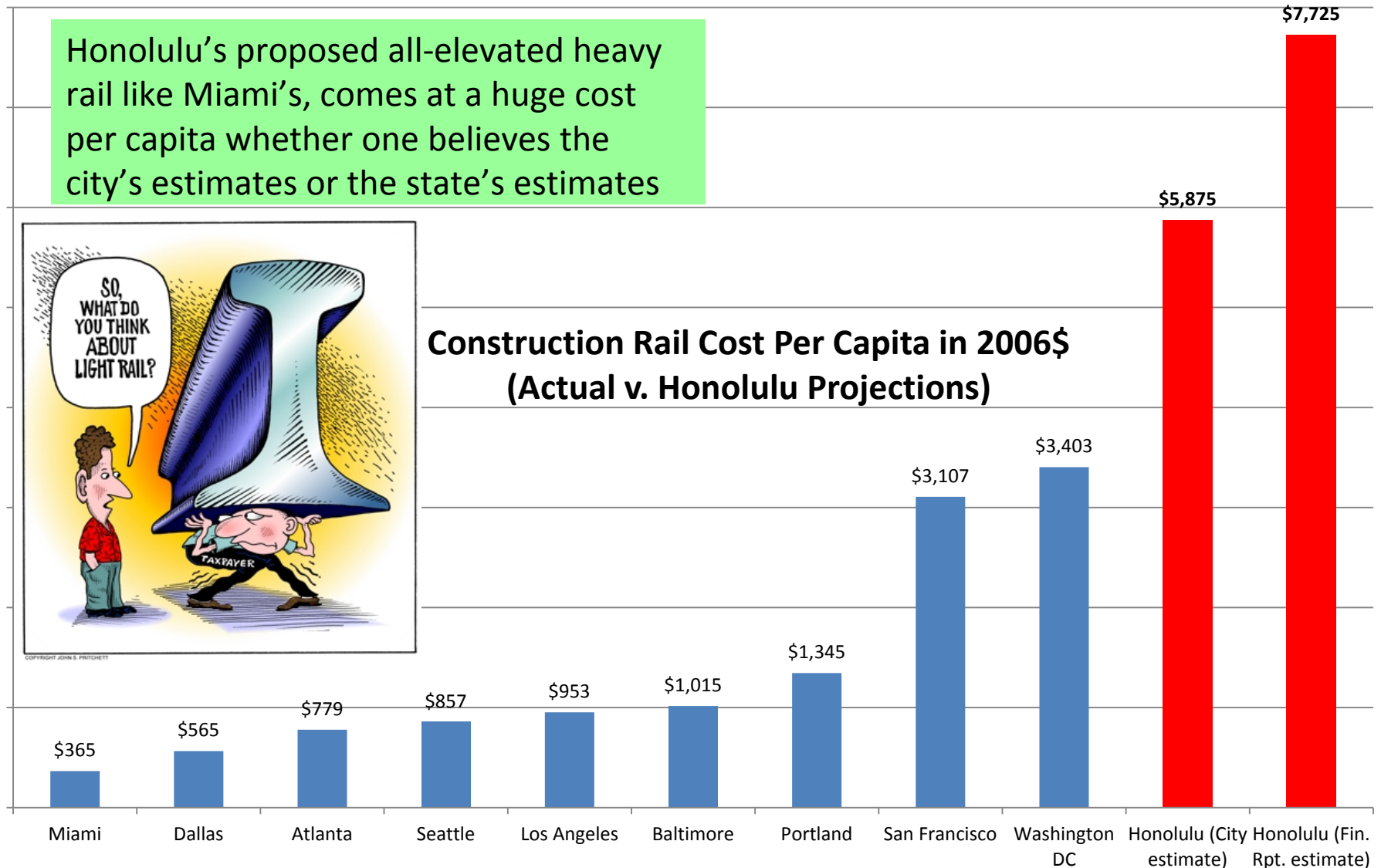
Investing \$1 Billion on the option used by 87.9% of the people (Drive Alone and Carpool) will produce far more benefits than investing the same \$1 Billion on the option used by 2.0% of the people (Rail).

Why is Honolulu Rail a Boondoggle?

Honolulu's proposed all-elevated heavy rail like Miami's, comes at a huge cost per capita whether one believes the city's estimates or the state's estimates



**Construction Rail Cost Per Capita in 2006\$
(Actual v. Honolulu Projections)**



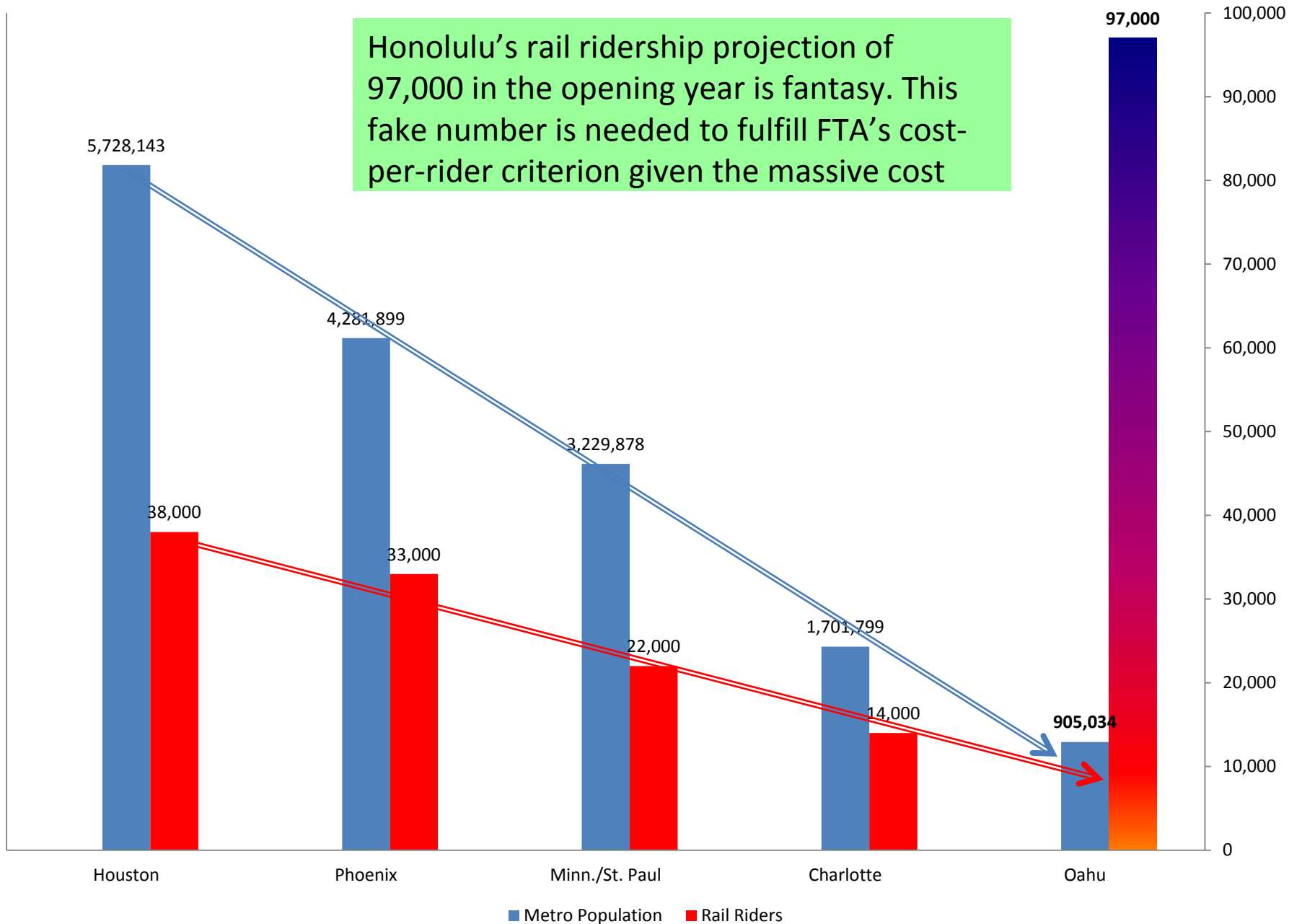
Honolulu Rail project summary posted by the Federal Transit Administration



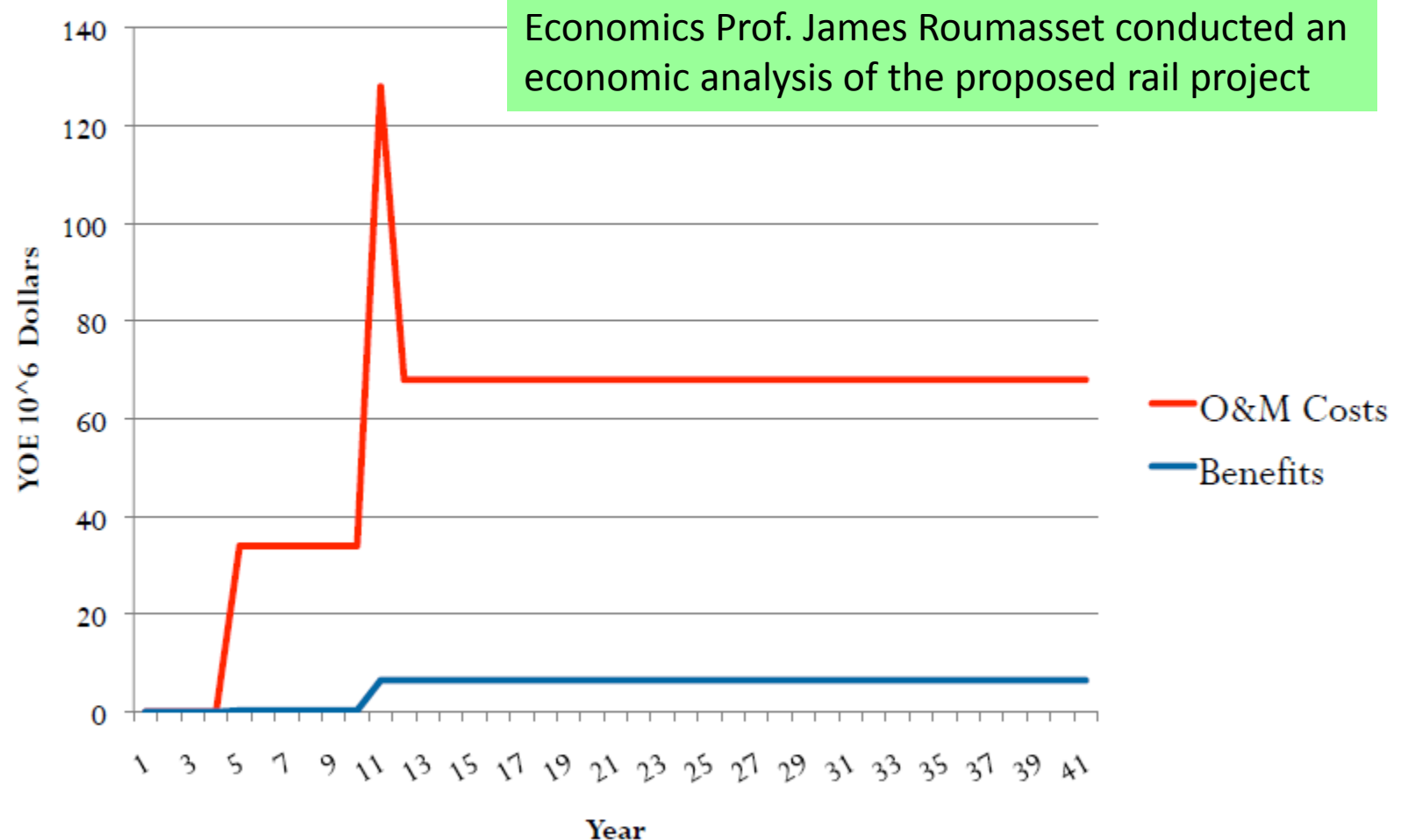
Summary Description	
Proposed Project:	Elevated rail line with 3 rd -rail electrification 20.1 Miles 21 Stations
Total Capital Cost (\$YOE):	\$5,347.68 Million (Includes \$290.3 million in finance charges)
Section 5309 New Starts Share (\$YOE):	\$1,550.00 Million (29.0%)
Annual Forecast Year Operating Cost:	\$125.92 Million
Ridership Forecast (2030):	116,000 Average Weekday Boardings 64,000 Daily New Riders
Opening Year Ridership Forecast (2019):	97,000 Average Weekday Boardings
FY 2011 Local Financial Commitment Rating:	Medium
FY 2011 Project Justification Rating:	Medium
FY 2011 Overall Project Rating:	Medium



Honolulu's rail ridership projection of 97,000 in the opening year is fantasy. This fake number is needed to fulfill FTA's cost-per-rider criterion given the massive cost



O&M costs vs. benefits: \$4.3 billion in construction costs buys a negative income stream!





Waipahu and Honolulu Oceanfront

Prepared by anonymous Honolulu architects.

Was and Is Unpopular... ~35% Support

QRail: How do you feel about the Honolulu Rail project: do you generally support or oppose it?

QRail	Overall
a. Support	35%
b. Oppose	55%
c. Does not matter	6%
z. Unsure	5%

QRail	OVERALL	Gender_Male	Gender_Female
a. Support	35%	41%	27%
b. Oppose	55%	48%	63%
c. Does not matter	6%	9%	5%
z. Unsure	5%	2%	6%

Honolulu Civil Beat – October 23, 2013

<http://www.civilbeat.com/articles/2013/10/23/20210-civil-beat-poll-majority-of-hawaii-voters-disapprove-of-abercrombie/>

Those who ignore history ... 1/3



**A perfectly matched
comparison**

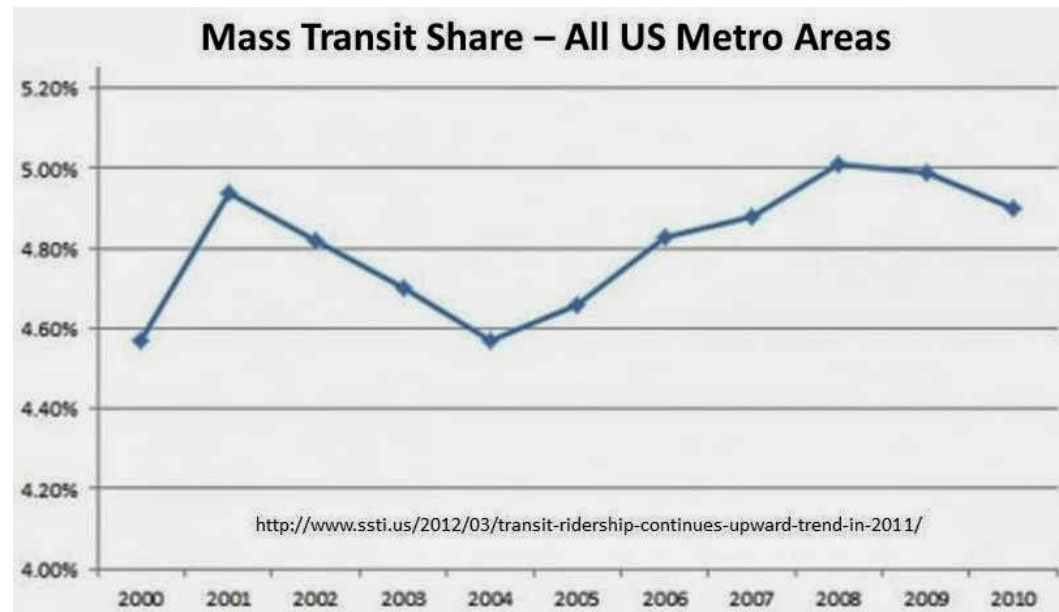
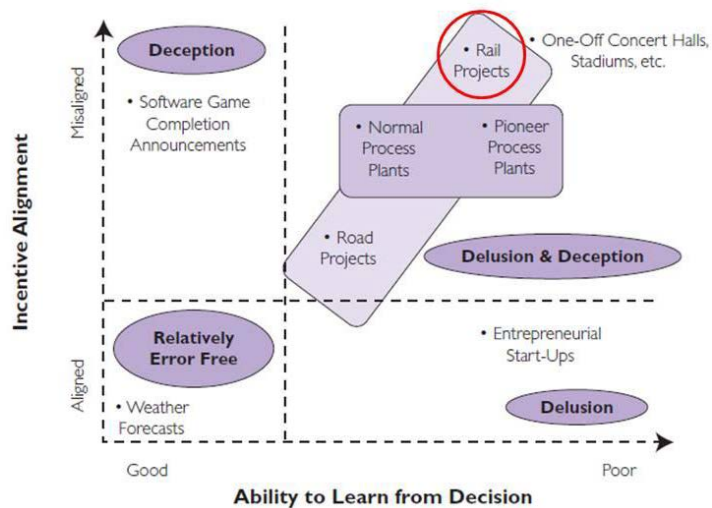
San Juan	Honolulu
Island	Island
Heavy Rail	Heavy Rail
FTA	FTA
PB	PB

Lessons from *Tren Urbano*

COST	RIDERS
PB estimated \$1.25 B	PB estimated 80,000
FTA approved	FTA approved
Actual cost \$2.25 B	Actual riders Under 25,000

Those who ignore history ... 2/3

- Professor Bent Flyvbjerg of Oxford University: rail projects are the most fraught with deception and delusion among large infrastructure projects
 - **Deception** means that the proponents lie to their constituents. Basically most cost and ridership forecasts for rail are very wrong. Costs are stated too low. Ridership is stated too high
 - **Delusion** means that the rail proponents believe that their project is better and different than all the failures of the past



Those who ignore history ... 3/3

- Ordered trains from a bankrupt manufacturer in a bankrupt country located as far away as possible from Hawaii ...



Extreme Conflict of Interest

- Honolulu's City Transportation Director is ex-**PB**
- His wife and son work in **PB** (PB = Parsons Brinckerhoff)
- Project Manager is **InfraConsult** – all its principals are ex-**PB** executives
- **PB** did Honolulu's 1990 rail, 2002 BRT, 2006-present rail. In 1990 and 2002 **PB** forecast growth for transit; the opposite occurred
- **Client (City), Project Manager and Prime Consultant are all... PB!**
- Three of the 5 members of the Transit Technology Panel were at **PB** for over 10 years; with a 4 to 1 vote they recommended ... rail
- Several officers at FTA's Washington, DC office are ex-**PB**
- The MPO "demand model" of Honolulu was developed by a **PB** manager in 1992-1994; he's one of the chief overseers at FTA
- "Taken for a Ride: Parsons Brinckerhoff Expose" <http://www.publicpurpose.com/ut-pblie.htm>

Manipulated Alternatives Analysis

- High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes is the nation's number one remedy for mitigating urban traffic congestion
- Under pressure from citizen groups PB included HOT Lanes and then made sure that they would fail...
- ... By terminating the HOT lanes at a traffic light!
- ... By adding two HOT lanes and removing the express freeway lane, locally known as the *zipper lane*
- ... By adding hundreds of unnecessary buses to the cost
- ... By adding expensive station(s) on the side of HOT lanes
- ... By using the wrong metric: HOT lanes **would be** the LPA if Person TTT instead of Vehicle TTT was used

What was done to stop this train?

- Forced revised scoping
- Forced HOT Lanes into the Alternatives Analysis
- Did not fight hard enough at the funding stage
- Ballot initiative
- Run for mayor ... twice + 1



- 2006: Democrat Legislature grants a raise to state *GET* from 4.0% to 4.5% → about \$150M per year for 15 years
- Although chances were good, Republican Gov. Lingle refuses to veto. Some say she struck a deal with Democrats to let her run unopposed in 2008 for a 2nd term, which did occur



- 2008 Primary: Council Member and Professor deny incumbent's outright re-election. He wins in the general. Millions of pro-rail media ads paid by public (rail tax) indirectly boosted incumbent's campaign

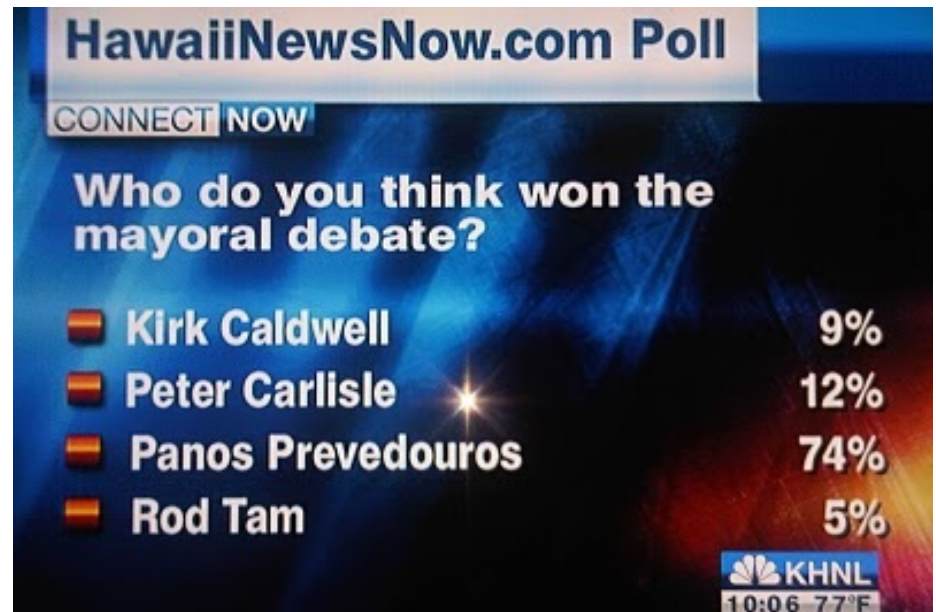
- 2008 ***Stop Rail Now*** initiative fails after collecting over 40,00 signatures. Council puts Rail YES or NO question on ballot
- 2 anti-rail candidates plus ***SRN*** initiative spread campaign efforts thin

<i>Honolulu: Ethics Civil Fines</i>		
	212 of 212	
YES	223,547	72.5%
NO	53,524	17.4%
Blank Votes:	31,294	10.1%
Over Votes:	78	0.0%
<i>Honolulu: Impeachment Circuit Courts</i>		
	212 of 212	
YES	224,363	72.7%
NO	49,300	16.0%
Blank Votes:	34,692	11.2%
Over Votes:	88	0.0%
<i>Honolulu: Dept. of Transportation Services Transit</i>		
	212 of 212	
YES	156,051	50.6%
NO	140,818	45.7%
Blank Votes:	11,456	3.7%
Over Votes:	118	0.0%



- 2010 Mayor decides to run for Gov. but he's defeated
- Professor, Mayor's second-in-command and City Prosecutor run for 2-year mayor term
- Prosecutor wins but only for those 2 years

MAYOR
Panos
FixOahuNow.com



- A few months after the ROD a group of well respected locals file a federal lawsuit for NEPA violations against Honolulu and FTA. A U.S. environmental attorney who partly authored NEPA was retained for the effort
- Native Hawaiian Paulette Kaleikini files cultural lawsuit in state court (sacred burial grounds). Loses. Appeals. State Supreme Court unanimously decides to stop rail and do an archaeological exploration of the full route

- 2012 mayor elections bring 2-term Gov. Ben Cayetano out of retirement, partners with professor and the NEPA lawsuit group to run for mayor. Handily wins the primary
- Out of 50+ NEPA suit complaints the federal judge finds issue with 3 and orders SEIS but no stoppage
- Decision appealed in District Court – San Francisco



- 2012 general: Gov. Cayetano unveils bus-on-shoulder, BRT and traffic bottleneck relief ... but **FAST** is not enough. Proponents called his 55%-45% defeat “the second referendum on rail”
- Construction unions and a shadow pro-rail lobby waged a multimillion smear campaign against Cayetano. A defamation suit is in state court now

- Fall 2013: Council on Historic Preservation approves cultural and archaeological study
- HART completes SEIS ordered by federal judge
- Rail construction resumes



- Waiting for the “fat lady to sing”
- Expecting several eminent domain suits

What was done to stop this train?

WE DID

Politics

Elections

**State
Law Suit**

**Federal
Law Suit**

**Ballot
Initiatives**

**Grassroots
Campaigns**

Close to \$1,500,000

THEY DID

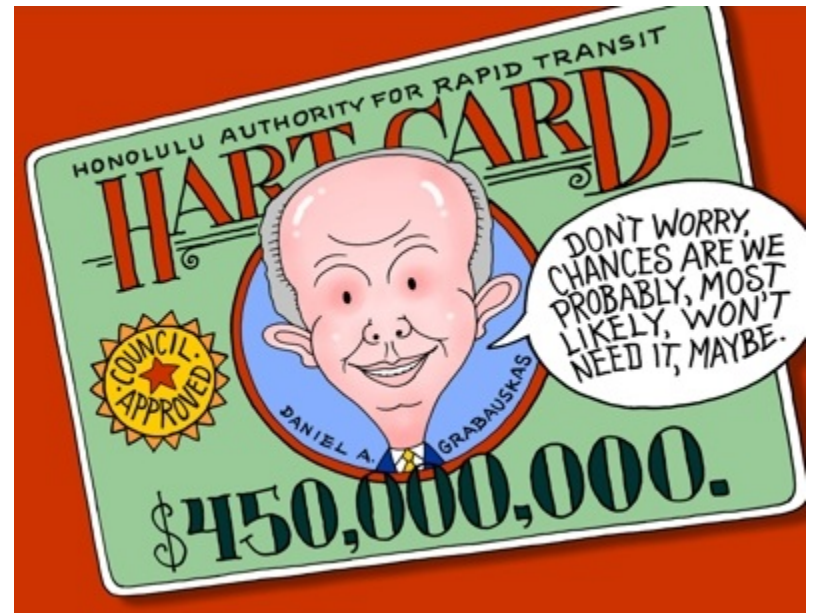
**New Laws
& Funding**

**Aggressive
Media
Campaigns
and
Outreach**

Over \$10,000,000

What Happened This Time?

- Rail is politics... the more one-sided the better
- Rail is money... the more the better... why do a \$1B BRT when you can do a \$5B rail?
- Mayor Hannemann seized the opportunity and Governor Lingle fell for it...



Road-and-car-haters promote boondoggles



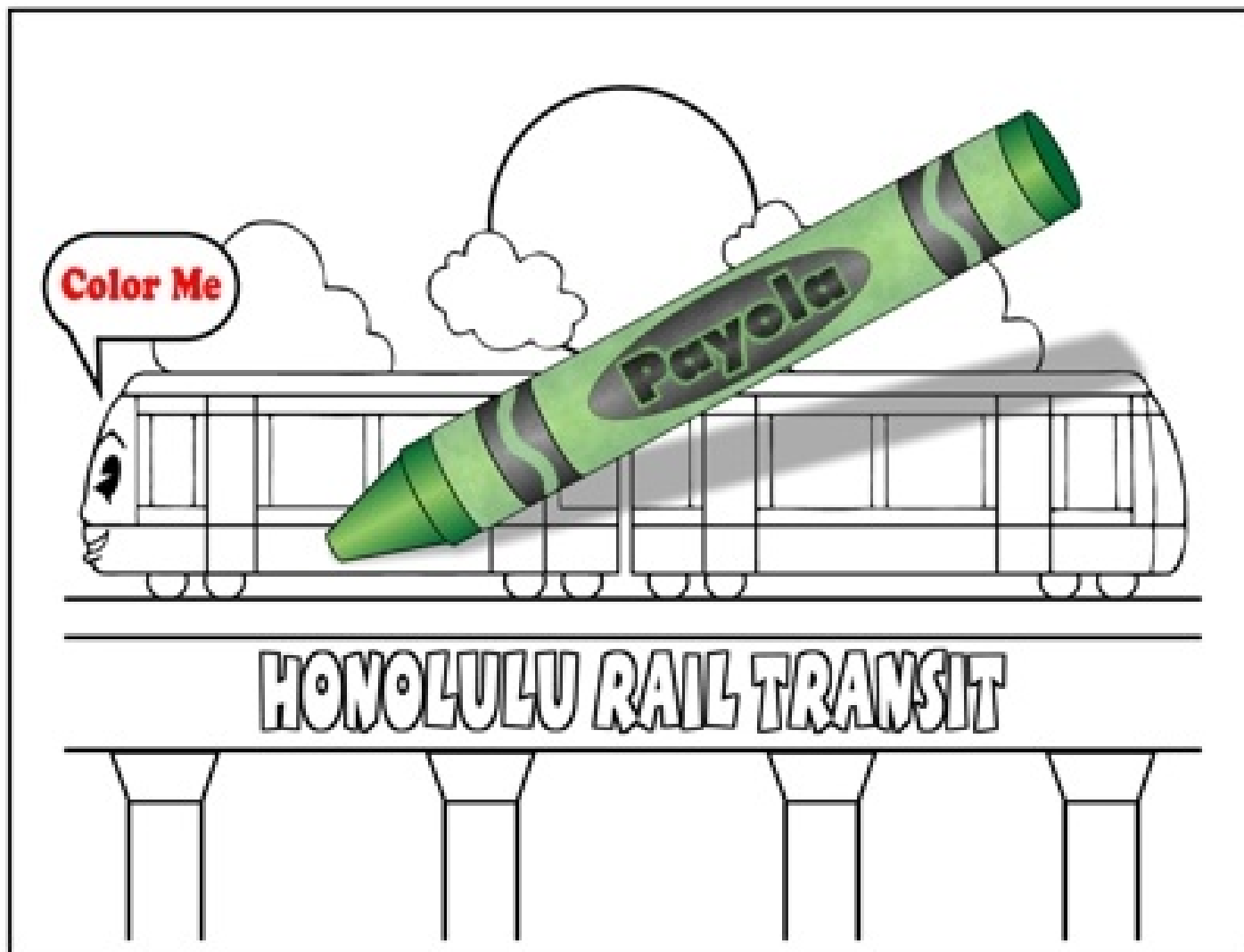
Bootleggers, Baptists, and Political Entrepreneurs

*Key Players in the Rational
Game and Morality Play of
Regulatory Politics*



RANDY T. SIMMONS, RYAN M. YONK, AND
DIANA W. THOMAS

Thanks!



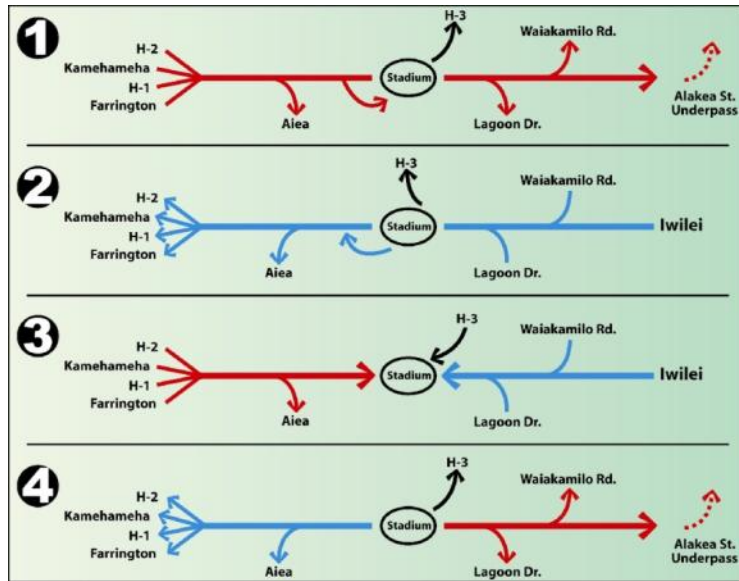
All cartoons courtesy of John Pritchett – <http://www.pritchettcartoons.com/>

Many Better and Cheaper Ideas

IMMEDIATE (1 to 4 years)	LONGER TERM (5 to 12 years)
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Pearl Harbor Ferry2. Underpasses3. Nimitz Viaduct (2 mi. of HOT Lanes)4. Traffic Signal Optimization5. In-town BRT6. Middle St. merge fix	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. 9 mi. of HOT Lanes2. Tunnel: Alexander St. to Pali Hwy.3. Complete Plan for ORL Light Rail4. Pearl Harbor ferry and cut-and-cover tunnel thru airport

Real Solutions: Goal → 20 Minutes

**A complete plan for reversible HOT lanes in Honolulu is available
and a segment of 2 out of 11 miles has an approved EIS**



**HOT: 100 buses, 400 vanpools,
4000 cars = 12,000 ppl/hr, seated**

Rail: 20 x 300 = 6,000 ppl/hr, crush load, $\frac{2}{3}$ are standees