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HONOLULU RAIL PROJECT TAGGED FOR \$250 MILLION IN PRESIDENT OBAMA'S FISCAL YEAR 2013 BUDGET

(Monday, February 13, 2012) – The Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation (HART), Honolulu Mayor Peter Carlisle, and Honolulu City Council Chair Ernest Y. Martin praised President Barack Obama today for including \$250 million for the Honolulu project in his FY2013 budget.

Reaction to President Obama's budget request was announced today by U.S. Senator Daniel K. Inouye and Hawaii's congressional delegation, who said that the budget request, which would come from the Federal Transit Administration's New Starts program, was the largest amount for any rail project in the country for FY2013.

"We are pleased to see that President Obama's budget includes a substantial request for Oahu's rail project and we are grateful to Senator Inouye and Hawaii's congressional delegation for their strong support," said Toru Hamayasu, interim executive director and CEO of the Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation. "This major budget request reflects the Federal Transit Administration's continued confidence that Oahu's rail project is one of the best transit projects in the nation and the fact that the project has been done by the book. It also indicates that we are near the end of the process towards obtaining the federal agreement for \$1.55 billion in federal money later this year."

In response to today's news, HART Board Chairwoman Carrie Okinaga said, "The latest budget request from the Obama Administration verifies that the FTA continues to support this project. Our costs are under budget and our revenues are on track. We are on the right path toward securing our federal funding and HART will continue to work collaboratively with the FTA and other stakeholders to achieve that goal."

Honolulu Mayor Peter Carlisle said the budget request shows that the project is on the right track.

"This latest budget request by President Obama validates the FTA's approvals that have shown that the rail project's engineering and finances are sound," Carlisle said. "This latest sign of commitment to Oahu's project signifies strong backing on the federal level. With last week's federal approval to begin the next phase of

construction, Oahu can soon expect thousands of jobs and in time a rail system that will serve our island's transportation needs for generations to come."

Honolulu City Council Chairman Ernest Y. Martin said today that "the inclusion of \$250 million in President Obama's budget and the issuance of the Letter of No Prejudice on February 6 are proof that support for Honolulu's rail project is solid in Washington. The fact that Hawaii leads the list of programs awaiting a full funding grant agreement is a demonstration of the effectiveness of Hawaii's congressional delegation."

The funding request is the latest federal show of support. Last week, the FTA granted the Honolulu rail project approval to begin construction of the foundation and pillars for the elevated guideway. That latest federal approval clears the way for additional construction on the first half of the elevated guideway from East Kapolei to Aloha Stadium, as well as work on the project's Maintenance and Storage Facility and three of the project's stations in Waipahu.

The 20-mile rail transit system from East Kapolei to Ala Moana is expected to open in 2019. For a copy of the FTA's latest approval and for updates on construction work days and times, visit the project website at www.honolulustransit.org or contact our hotline at 566-2299.

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