

## Both sides of issue get applause at hearing on H-3 and safety risk

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Three hours of testimony — some of it highly technical, some of it highly emotional — was given at Castle High School last night during the latest public hearing on the proposed H-3 freeway.

Most of the more than two dozen speakers addressed a relatively new twist in the 12-year-old controversy: whether intense electrical fields generated by the Coast Guard's Omega Navigation Radio Station in Haiku Valley could significantly threaten the health and safety of motorists on the highway after it is completed during the 1990s.

Representatives on both sides of the issue got applause from those among the crowd of more than 200 people.

The hearing was conducted by the state Department of Transportation, which provided expert testimony by two engineers who have determined that the highway could be made safe from any effects of the navigation station.

Boynton G. Hagaman, the engineer who designed the Haiku station, said he had made tests and found nothing that was not also present at other, more powerful navigation stations in populated areas elsewhere in the world. He added that motorists would be further shielded by the metal in their automobiles.

Dr. William Guy, an engineer and expert in bio-electromagnetics, said

the proposed route near the navigation station would be made safer because of specially shielded wires that would be constructed along the route. He said the most that might happen would be that a person with a pacemaker, who happened to be standing alongside the highway and touching a large vehicle such as a truck, might be slightly affected.

"But if a pacemaker slowing did occur, the person touching the truck would feel discomfort and be prompted to disengage contact with the vehicle," Guy said.

Donald Griffin, who said he was speaking for himself, said "exaggerated concerns have been raised (by persons) who play upon the nightmares of people who are not technically qualified to evaluate the statements for themselves." Among those who said last night that they were still worried about the navigation station's effects were Fred Hertlein, a health consultant, who said he was not satisfied by testimony received from persons with an ax to grind. Recalling the recent discoveries of the previously unknown dangers of asbestos, he said the state was running the risk of future lawsuits.

"I'm talking about long-term genetic effects," he said. "These things have not been studied."

Dr. Lawrence H. Piette of the Cancer Center of Hawaii expressed his distrust of engineers and raised the possibility that electromagnetic forces could cause cataracts and malignant tumors. He recommended

that a thorough scientific study be conducted before the navigation station route is approved.

Paul Lane, a representative for one brand of heart pacemakers, said that only one of at least 28 different types was used in a state study to determine if they would be affected adversely.

"Can we trust the life of a person on a test that studied only one pacemaker?" he asked.

The most impassioned testimony given last night was that of Ahna Derby Howe, who bypassed the new issue of the electromagnetic field and noted that her husband died last year after more than a decade of fighting the H-3 proposal.

"That death was indirectly due to his deep frustration with the stubborn refusal of our leaders to treat the perceived wishes and desires and opinions of the electorate with any degree of sensitivity at all," she said.

"Please keep Bob's view so that Bob can continue to enjoy it," she said, sitting down to cheers and applause.

Pua Anthony of the Kaaawa Community Association said there are two basic faults with the highway: It is useless and it is unnecessary.

"It is useless because it connects two areas that do not need to be connected and because it ignores the problem that should be solved — how to get back and forth between urban Honolulu and the Windward side," she said.

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