

## Making TheBus Elder-Friendly

Have you ever seen an old lady fall down on the bus because no one gave her a seat? I have. One form of public transportation that many people in Hawaii utilize is TheBus. As I watch people climb aboard TheBus on a daily basis, my heart goes out to the elderly, who do not have an easy time doing so. I am always ready to give up my seat, but as I look around me, not many others take the same initiative.

From my experience, I have noticed two main groups of people who ride TheBus: students and the elderly. Despite the signs placed above priority seats, most youngsters ignore the elderly, and remain glued to their seats. Because of this, the elderly have to commute uncomfortably, and on some occasions, they fall over. I have noticed that the current labels above priority seats are not much use. They are not prominent, and since they are old, many have faded badly. Over time, the stickers have blended in with the bus, and most people turn a blind eye to them.

My proposal is to have new stickers and banners designed to catch the eye of commuters. They should be placed in very prominent places on board the bus. Bright colors should be utilized, and words should be in a larger font, emphasizing the great need to help the elderly. Visual aids such as pictures or illustrations should be used on posters to catch more attention, as well as slogans. This would be a low-cost project, yet it would yield many benefits. In addition, the messages should be promoted over the PA system on TheBus. Currently, the PA system announces things like silencing mobile phones, so for little additional cost, management could add something like "Please remember to give up your seat to a person in need."

A great way to implement the new stickers would be to hold a poster design contest. This contest could be open to elementary through high school students statewide, which is perfect

since the target of the campaign is students. The most innovative and persuasive posters per age group could then be used as stickers on the bus. With multiple winners, these stickers would be changed throughout the year, thus creating a fresh new look every so often. The contest could be held annually, with prizes such as a free bus pass or a certificate commending the winner and his or her school.

This campaign and contest to help the elderly on the bus goes hand-in-hand with Mr. Ching's accomplishments, as he was dedicated to help the elderly, never once hesitating to donate to charities and foundations. He gave the Palolo Chinese Home a chance to create something new to change the lives of many. A brand new three-story building was constructed to benefit the elderly people at the home. Hopefully, TheBus will be able to help out the elderly in the near future as well!