

The increasing numbers of careless drivers in Hawaii pose a problem for pedestrians. Fatalities that have occurred over the past few years due to pedestrian and car collisions have skyrocketed to an unbearable number.

Hawaii is near the top of the nation when it comes to pedestrian fatality rates among most age groups. Hawaii has consistently been ranked number one in the nation for senior-aged pedestrians fatalities, according to the Department of Health. Hawaii is also said to be ranked 13<sup>th</sup> for pedestrian fatalities among all age groups. The Department of Health's data from 2007 to 2011 show 524 pedestrian accidents on the island of Oahu with 90 of them fatal. Eighty percent of those killed were over the age of 60.

Elderly Hawaii pedestrians were killed at a rate more than two times the national average. The state data show that Hawaii has approximately 24 deaths per 100,000 residents compared to the United States average of 10 deaths per 100,000 residents.

Planners, designers, and safety experts need to think differently how to keep traffic flowing while ensuring pedestrians safety. The Honolulu City Council had recently passed Bill 26, also known as Honolulu's "Complete Streets" resolution. It requires city agencies to develop and redesign Oahu's roadways so that they're more accommodating for everyone. The Hawaii Department of Transportation has also recently published a Pedestrian Safety Plan, which sets the framework for pedestrian safety and facility improvements across the state.

There are solutions to lower or even avoid the collision between cars and pedestrians. At crosswalks there are walking signals that flash when it's time for the pedestrians to cross. The walking signal should flash after a five-second wait to ensure the safety of the pedestrian. Since there are many drivers who are impatient, they immediately press down on the gas pedal when they see the light turning yellow.

Some people automatically walk forward without looking both ways when crossing because they assume that since the sign says to walk, they can walk freely. There is a chance that the person walking and the car passing by will collide because neither of them took the time to actually think about what they were doing.

Clarence T.C. Ching was a humble man who did a lot for his community. Mr. Ching had a difficult start, but through his determination and hard work he became a wealthy man. If the people of Hawaii took time to become more aware of the issue of pedestrian accidents, they would want to make changes in their communities to ensure the safety of all. Mr. Ching never gave up hope. He gave time, energy, and assistance to many organizations and he definitely would have wanted to ensure pedestrian safety.