

JAN 25 2006

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO AMBULANCE SERVICES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the provision of
2 emergency ambulance service is critical for the health and well
3 being of all the residents of the State. The legislature also
4 finds that, although call volumes for emergency ambulance
5 service have increased annually, more than half of all calls are
6 for non-emergency service. This is unfair and subjects those
7 patients who truly have an emergency situation to unnecessary
8 waits for an ambulance to arrive. The legislature further finds
9 that many people, as well as hotels, use ambulance services as a
10 type of free mobile clinic. Many emergency ambulance calls are
11 made to shift liability from a hotel to the ambulance provider
12 because the ambulance provider must take responsibility for a
13 patient's condition after examining the patient, even if only to
14 put on a band-aid or inform a patient that the person has a
15 cold. Hawaii is one of very few states that do not charge for
16 emergency ambulance service response when a patient is not
17 transported to an emergency room for emergency care.
18 Consequently, this leaves the State's emergency response system



1 vulnerable to the abuse by individuals and entities who take
 2 unfair advantage of these full services, while the ambulance
 3 providers incur added fuel, insurance, and supplies costs and
 4 those patients truly in need of emergency ambulance service are
 5 subjected to reduced service.

6 The purpose of this Act is to authorize ambulance providers
 7 to charge a fee for non-emergency ambulance service response.

8 SECTION 2. Chapter 321, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
 9 amended by adding a new section to part XVIII to be
 10 appropriately designated and to read as follows:

11 "§321- Emergency ambulance service response; fee; when.
 12 The director of health may adopt rules in accordance with
 13 chapter 91 to allow emergency ambulance service providers to
 14 charge a fee for an emergency ambulance service response during
 15 which emergency medical services personnel examine a patient who
 16 subsequently is determined not to be in need of transport to an
 17 emergency room for emergency medical care."

18 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

19 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

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INTRODUCED BY:

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Report Title:

Ambulance Services; Charges for Non-Emergency Calls

Description:

Allows director of health to adopt rules to allow emergency ambulance service providers to charge a fee for an emergency ambulance service response during which emergency medical services personnel examine a patient who, ultimately, is not transported to an emergency room for emergency medical care.

