



THE HAWAII STATE SENATE
The Twenty-Sixth Legislature
Regular Session of 2012

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
The Honorable Sen. David Y. Ige, Chair
The Honorable Sen. Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

DATE OF HEARING: Thursday, March 29, 2012
TIME OF HEARING: 9:00 a.m.
PLACE OF HEARING: Conference Room 211

TESTIMONY ON HB 1953 HD1 SD1 RELATING TO EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE

By DAYTON M. NAKANELUA,
State Director of the United Public Workers,
AFSCME Local 646, AFL-CIO (“UPW”)

My name is Dayton M. Nakanelua and I am the State Director of the United Public Workers, AFSCME, Local 646, AFL-CIO (UPW). The UPW is the exclusive representative for approximately 11,000 public employees, which include blue collar, non-supervisory employees in Bargaining Unit 01 and institutional, health and correctional employees in Bargaining Unit 10, in the State of Hawaii and various counties. The UPW also represents about 1,500 members of the private sector.

The UPW strongly supports HB 1953 HD1 SD1 that appropriates necessary funds to increase the on-call availability of emergency medical services and ambulance services to the communities in Leeward Oahu. The proposed legislation also appropriates necessary funds through a grant and from general revenues of the state to assist Wahiawa General hospital in providing additional emergency room services.

The closures of Hawaii Medical Center’s hospitals in Ewa Beach and Liliha have negatively impacted emergency medical care for residents on the Leeward Coast. The County of

Honolulu emergency medical services division will now pick up the slack by responding, transporting and attending to medical emergencies in the leeward area that they may not have had to attend to in the past.

HB 1953 HD1 SD1 also provides funds as a grant to Wahiwa General Hospital, which will allow them to provide additional emergency room services, which is greatly needed.

Thank you for opportunity to testify on this measure.



SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
Senator David Ige, Chair

Conference Room 221
March 29, 2012 at 9:00 a.m.

Comments in Support of HB 1953 HD 1 SD 1: Relating to Emergency Medical Care.

The Healthcare Association of Hawaii advocates for its member organizations that span the entire spectrum of health care, including all acute care hospitals, as well as long term care facilities, home care agencies, and hospices. In addition to providing quality care to all of Hawaii's residents, our members contribute significantly to Hawaii's economy by employing over 40,000 people. Thank you for this opportunity to comment in support of HB 1953 HD 1 SD 1, which appropriates funds for emergency medical services in West Oahu and Central Oahu.

Two emergency rooms on Oahu closed when the Hawaii Medical Center hospitals ceased operations in December of 2011. Predictably, the remaining emergency rooms on Oahu have experienced significantly increased usage since then. They have been making adjustments to compensate for increased utilization, but they must work within fiscal limitations. This appropriation allows them to expand the existing capacity.

For the foregoing reasons, the Healthcare Association supports HB 1953 HD 1 SD 1.