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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO EMERGENCY RESPONSE VEHICLES.

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

1           SECTION 1. **Findings and purpose.** (a) The legislature  
2 finds that a review of procedures for emergency response  
3 vehicles is necessary to address issues of current concern to  
4 the public. Specifically, the issues that have been raised are  
5 whether:

6           (1) Emergency response vehicles sirens are audible by  
7           motorists;

8           (2) Motorists can see emergency response vehicle flashing  
9           lights;

10          (3) Motorists give low priority to move out of the way for  
11          the emergency response vehicles or even ignore them;

12          (4) Emergency vehicle lights and sirens are effective  
13          warning devices;

14          (5) Travelling with lights and sirens decreases emergency  
15          vehicle response and transport times, thus saving  
16          lives;

17          (6) The use of lights or sirens is necessary for responses  
18          that are not time-sensitive;



- 1 (7) Driving an emergency response vehicle with lights and  
2 sirens is more dangerous for the driver or the public  
3 than driving without lights and sirens;
- 4 (8) Time-critical patients or victims can be identified to  
5 justify the use of lights and sirens at the time and  
6 dispatch of a 911 call;
- 7 (9) There has ever been a lawsuit filed in the United  
8 States or Canada complaining that an emergency  
9 response vehicle responded without using lights and  
10 sirens when the use of the lights and sirens would  
11 have been appropriate;
- 12 (10) The public expects the use of lights and sirens for  
13 emergency response vehicles; and
- 14 (11) Whether it is common for a caller to request the  
15 services of an emergency response vehicle without the  
16 use of lights or sirens.

17 (b) In 1994, the National Association of Emergency Medical  
18 Services Physicians, together with the National Association of  
19 State Emergency Medical Services Directors, published official  
20 practice-setting recommendations as follows:

- 21 (1) Emergency medical services medical directors should  
22 participate directly in the development of policies



- 1 governing emergency medical-vehicle response, patient  
2 transport, and the use of warning lights and sirens;
- 3 (2) The use of lights and sirens during an emergency  
4 response and during patient transport should be based  
5 on standardized protocols that take into account  
6 situational and patient problem assessments;
- 7 (3) Emergency medical services agencies should use an  
8 emergency medical-dispatch priority reference system  
9 that has been developed in conjunction with and  
10 approved by the emergency medical services medical  
11 director to determine which requests for pre-hospital  
12 medical care require the use of warning lights and  
13 sirens;
- 14 (4) Except for suspected life-threatening, time-critical  
15 cases or cases involving multiple patients, response  
16 by more than one emergency medical vehicle using  
17 lights and sirens usually is unnecessary;
- 18 (5) The use of emergency warning lights and sirens should  
19 be limited to emergency responses and emergency-  
20 transport situations; and



1           (6) Scientific studies evaluating the effectiveness of  
2           warning lights and sirens under specific situations  
3           should be conducted and validated.

4           (c) The purpose of this Act is to establish a temporary  
5 task force to determine, when an emergency response vehicle  
6 responds to a call in the State, the:

7           (1) Impact of the use of emergency response vehicle sirens  
8           in terms of noise and whether the use of sirens  
9           enhances the safety of first responders and the  
10          public; and

11          (2) Relative effectiveness of the use of emergency  
12          response vehicle lights instead of the use of sirens  
13          at night.

14          **SECTION 2. Temporary task force; duty; composition; no**  
15 **compensation; report; termination.** (a) There is created a  
16 temporary emergency response vehicle noise task force within the  
17 department of health, to examine the use and effectiveness of  
18 lights and sirens on emergency response vehicles. The task  
19 force shall specifically determine the:

20          (1) Impact of the use of emergency response vehicle sirens  
21          in terms of noise and whether the use of sirens



1 enhances the safety of first responders and the  
2 public; and

3 (2) Relative effectiveness of the use of lights rather  
4 than sirens at night,

5 when an emergency response vehicle responds to a call in the  
6 State.

7 (b) The temporary task force shall consist of:

8 (1) Two members of the house of representatives to be  
9 appointed by the speaker of the house of  
10 representatives;

11 (2) Two members of the senate to be appointed by the  
12 president of the senate;

13 (3) One member representing the department of health,  
14 emergency medical services and injury prevention  
15 system branch;

16 (4) One member representing the state emergency medical  
17 services advisory committee, to be requested to serve  
18 as a member;

19 (5) One member representing the department of  
20 transportation;

21 (6) One member representing the department of public  
22 safety;



1           (7) Four members, one each representing each of the mayors  
2           of the four counties;

3           (8) Four members, one each representing each of the police  
4           departments of the four counties;

5           (9) Four members, one each representing each of the fire  
6           departments of the four counties; and

7           (10) Two members representing emergency medical service  
8           personnel, to be requested to serve as members.

9           (c) Members shall not be compensated but shall be  
10          reimbursed for necessary expenses incurred, including travel  
11          expenses, in carrying out their duties. The department of  
12          health shall provide all necessary administrative, professional,  
13          technical, and clerical support required by the task force.

14          (d) The task force shall submit a written report of its  
15          findings and recommendations, including any necessary proposed  
16          state and county legislation, to the legislature and to the  
17          council of each county, no later than twenty days prior to the  
18          convening of the regular session of 2014.

19          (e) The task force shall terminate on June 30, 2014.



1 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

2

INTRODUCED BY:

Hal Abrahams

JAN 17 2013



**Report Title:**

Emergency Response Vehicle Noise Task Force; Established

**Description:**

Establishes a temporary emergency response vehicle noise task force to determine the impact of the emergency response vehicle sirens in terms of excessive noise, the effect on public safety, and the relative effectiveness of the use of emergency lights instead of the use of sirens at night.

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*





## ichiyama1 - Tate

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 03, 2013 6:36 PM  
**To:** TRNtestimony  
**Cc:** anitadimauro@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for HB90 on Feb 4, 2013 10:00AM

### **HB90**

Submitted on: 2/3/2013

Testimony for TRN on Feb 4, 2013 10:00AM in Conference Room 309

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Anita DiMauro	Individual	Support	No

Comments: There are no non government members on your committee so I would like to be on the committee. I have talked to many people about the emergency vehicle noise in Makiki where I live so I think my voice is important. Thank you for your consideration. I am currently on the State Highway Safety Committee, appointed by the Governor, and my six year term ends in June. I have been an active member of MADD since 1984 and have testified before both the Transportation and Judiciary committees.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing , improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email [webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov)

February 4, 2013



The Honorable Ryan I. Yamane, Chair  
House Committee on Transportation  
Twenty-Seventh State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2013  
State of Hawaii

**RE: H.B. 90; RELATING TO EMERGENCY RESPONSE VEHICLES.**

Chair Yamane, Vice-Chair Ichiyama and members of the House Committee on Transportation, speaking as an individual citizen, I strongly support the passage of H.B. 90.

Although my family and I have lived in the same location for nearly 20 years--in the vicinity of 2 hospitals and a fire station--the issue of late-night sirens (from emergency response vehicles) has somehow gotten significantly worse over the past few years. Not only are emergency vehicles passing by more often, but also, rather than simply using sirens as a warning when approaching intersections, sirens are blasted continuously as the emergency vehicle travels throughout the neighborhood --sometimes blaring their horns as well. At its worst, we were awoken four (4) times in the same week, all between the hours of 12:00 a.m. and 5:00 a.m. Sometimes two (2) sirens would pass by in the same night (e.g. 12:30 a.m. and 3:45 a.m.).

While I understand the need to protect the safety of pedestrians and other vehicles, our neighborhood is EXTREMELY quiet during the late-night and early-morning hours, and there are practically no other vehicles or pedestrians on our roads after 9 or 10 pm. Last Fall, my boyfriend & I actually went door-to-door in our neighborhood, collecting signatures from other people who are also very concerned about this issue. Within 2 1/2 hours, we collected 96 signatures (see attached). Using this list, we have tried to communicate our concerns to the ambulance and fire truck drivers—via the neighborhood board and others—to some success.

Over the past two months, it seems that many of the late-night ambulance and fire truck drivers in our area have switched to “chirping” their sirens, and only when approaching intersections. However, this practice is still inconsistent and there are still occasional late-night sirens (blasted continuously); this probably depends on the driver. During the daytime and early-evening hours, it’s not uncommon to hear sirens and horns going up and down the street, up to four (4) times a day.

While I have not discussed this issue with anyone in other districts, I can only guess that our neighborhood’s moderate success was due to our proactive request, rather than a department-wide policy-change within EMS or HFD. Moreover, there is no guarantee that this success will continue over the coming months or years. For all of the foregoing reasons, I strongly support the passage of H.B. 90. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

We, the people signed below, greatly appreciate the important service and dedication of our City and County ambulance & fire truck drivers. However, please understand that we try very hard to be good neighbors to our neighborhood hospitals and fire house, so we would humbly ask them to do the same for us. When ambulances and/or fire trucks run through our streets late at night or early in the morning, with their sirens blasting the entire way, or sometimes even honking their horns along the way, it is very very loud for all of us who live here. It can—and does—wake us up at all hours of the night, rattle our otherwise quiet homes and neighborhood, and affect our daily lives...sometimes even our ability to concentrate or do our own jobs.

Between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., and especially during the hours when it is dark enough for vehicles & pedestrians to see an emergency vehicle's flashing lights, please do not keep sirens on continuously as you travel through our residential streets. There is very little traffic on our streets during these hours, and most of us are in our homes and/or sound asleep. We do understand if sirens must be "chirped" at busy intersections or other important safety points, but please remember to place some value our family's peace & quiet...and sleep.

Thank you very much for your help and understanding. We will continue to be supportive and live side-by-side with everyone as a community, and hope you will do the same.

Sincerely ~ Your neighbors and residents of Lanakila & lower Liliha

We, the people signed below, greatly appreciate the important service and dedication of our City and County ambulance & fire truck drivers. However, please understand that we try very hard to be good neighbors to our neighborhood hospitals and fire house, so we would humbly ask them to do the same for us. When ambulances and/or fire trucks run through our streets late at night or early in the morning, with their sirens blasting the entire way, or sometimes even honking their horns along the way, it is very very loud for all of us who live here. It can—and does—wake us up at all hours of the night, rattle our otherwise quiet homes and neighborhood, and affect our daily lives...sometimes even our ability to concentrate or do our own jobs.

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<u>John Sogaki</u>	<u>Edna Ayon</u>	_____
<u>Juan Soria</u>	<u>Simone Liang</u>	_____
<u>Robert Ching</u>	<u>Ratna Mayasud</u>	_____
<u>Lance Lopez</u>	<u>Idatulayn</u>	_____
<u>Hilmita Suiand</u>	<u>Ms. E. Soy</u>	_____
<u>Suzia B. Soriano</u>	<u>Wong. Y P</u>	_____
<u>Carina G. Manzanillo</u>	<u>Jo. Yukker</u>	_____
<u>Debra P. Oatway</u>	<u>Angela</u>	_____



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<u>Cherh Lee</u>	<u><del>Amiah</del></u>	<u>Susan DeLara</u>
<u>Thomas G.M. Ho</u>	<u>Jim Ann</u>	<u>Regina</u>
<u><del>Shirley</del></u>	<u>Wu Wu</u>	<u>Tracy</u>
<u>Laetta L. H. Adoga</u>	<u>Phyllis</u>	<u>Elizabeth</u>
<u>Marcosoff</u>	<u>Yin</u>	<u>Ronan Ronal</u>
<u>Atty Gypso</u>	<u>Jin Sun</u>	<u>Kasand V Kasand</u>
<u>Megan</u>	<u><del>_____</del></u>	<u>Wally</u>
<u>Ernest S. Greene</u>	<u>Mingyan</u>	<u>Doris T. Miller</u>

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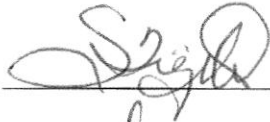
		
		
		
		
		
		
		
		

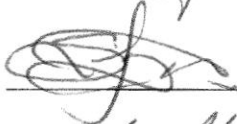
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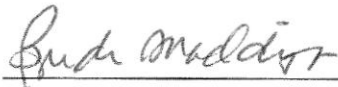
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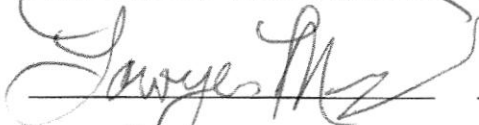
  
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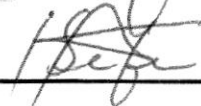
  
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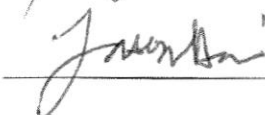
  
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**THE QUEEN'S HEALTH SYSTEMS**

**LATE**

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1301 Punchbowl Street • Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 • Phone (808) 691-5900

**H.B. 90, RELATING TO NOISE**  
**House Committee on Transportation**  
**February 4, 2013, 10:00 a.m.**  
**Room 309**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **with concern** to H.B. 309, Relating to Noise. My name Cindy Kamikawa, Vice President of Nursing, Trauma, ED, and Chief Nursing Officer for The Queen's Medical Center.

We respectfully suggest that a task force on this issue is not necessary as sirens are an important option that EMS must retain the use of, as necessary, to navigate through traffic swiftly and safely. However, should the committee choose to advance this measure, we request a representative from a Level II Trauma Center be added as a member of the task force.