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## A BILL FOR AN ACT

MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES IN THE  
PUNA DISTRICT.

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

1           SECTION 1. The district of Puna is approximately five  
2 hundred square miles in area and has a population of 45,326,  
3 according to the 2010 census. By comparison, Puna is slightly  
4 smaller than the island of Kauai in size and roughly twenty  
5 thousand less in population. Puna has become the fastest  
6 growing district in the State of Hawaii, with a population  
7 increase of forty-four per cent since 2000. Over the next  
8 fifteen years the population of Puna is expected to increase to  
9 approximately 75,000. This population growth has significantly  
10 impacted the paramedic units in the districts of Puna and Hilo  
11 and will continue to do so. The Hawaii county fire department  
12 plans to station an additional paramedic unit in Puna that will  
13 be equipped with advanced life support equipment.

14           The legislature finds that access to primary health care in  
15 Puna is challenging for the community, since primary care  
16 services are as much as thirty miles away for many residents.  
17 When coupled with economic and transportation challenges, Hawaii



1 county emergency medical services have become the access point  
2 for health care in Puna.

3 Emergency medical services in Puna are provided by the  
4 Hawaii county fire department's Medic 5 and 10 units, based in  
5 Keaau and Pahoa fire stations, respectively. These units are  
6 strategically based to serve the bulk of Puna's population,  
7 handling ninety-one per cent of emergency medical services calls  
8 in Puna. Medic 19 at the Volcano fire station serves a less-  
9 populated area of Puna but fills a wide gap between Keaau and  
10 Kau.

11 According to Hawaii county fire department statistics,  
12 since 2007 there has been a fifty per cent increase in responses  
13 from Medics 1 and 3 into the Puna district, and there are  
14 numerous times when the majority of east Hawaii's Medics 1, 3,  
15 5, 10, and 19 are covering calls in the Puna district, which  
16 leaves Hilo without adequate emergency medical services. From  
17 2007 to 2008, the Puna district accounted for 3,970, or twenty-  
18 one per cent, of the emergency medical service calls in Hawaii  
19 county. From 2012 to 2013, this figure increased to 4,994, or  
20 twenty-eight per cent, of Hawaii county's 911 calls.



1           The legislature further finds that Puna needs an advanced  
2 life support ambulance/paramedic unit in the interest of  
3 protecting the public health and safety of Puna residents.

4           The purpose of this Act is to make an appropriation to the  
5 Hawaii county fire department to add an advanced life support  
6 ambulance/paramedic unit to serve the Puna district.

7           SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general  
8 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$                    or so  
9 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2014-2015 to  
10 the Hawaii county fire department for an additional advanced  
11 life support ambulance/paramedic unit, including costs for  
12 personnel and equipment, to serve the Puna district.

13           The sum appropriated shall be expended by the county of  
14 Hawaii for the purposes of this Act.

15           SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2050.



S.B. NO. 2644  
S.D. 2

**Report Title:**

Hawaii County Emergency Medical Services; Puna District;  
Appropriation

**Description:**

Makes an unspecified appropriation to the Hawaii county fire department to add an advanced life support ambulance/medic unit to serve the Puna district. Effective 07/01/2050. (SD2)

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