



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P.O. Box 3378
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96801-3378

In reply, please refer to:
File:

House Committee on Health

SB 2348, RELATING TO HEALTH

**Testimony of Gary L. Gill
Acting Director of Health**

Monday, January 27, 2014, 1:30 pm

1 **Department's Position:** We support this bill provided its passage does not replace or adversely impact
2 priorities indicated in our Executive Budget.

3 **Fiscal Implications:** Appropriates an unspecified amount of General Funds for two emergency medical
4 response vehicles in Hawaii County.

5 **Purpose and Justification:** This measure seeks to augment the Hawaii County emergency medical
6 services system for residents of the Puna and Makalei areas. It calls for two emergency medical
7 response vehicles. While the exact nature of these vehicles is not described, it appears that these would
8 be 911 advanced life support rapid response units that do not transport. Such units can improve
9 response times to 911 emergencies by EMS as a lower cost than the addition of full ambulances. This is
10 because only one paramedic is needed to staff the rapid response, while two providers are needed for an
11 ambulance. The rapid response paramedic will initiate assessment and treatment while awaiting the
12 transporting ambulance. These units can also assist with multi-casualty incidents.

13 The Hawaii County Fire Department currently operates 19 ambulance units on the island of
14 Hawaii. The last unit added was Unit 3, Hawaii Ocean View Estates, in FY2005.

15 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

William P. Kenoi
Mayor



Darren J. Rosario
Fire Chief

Renwick J. Victorino
Deputy Fire Chief

County of Hawai'i
HAWAII FIRE DEPARTMENT
25 Aupuni Street • Suite 2501 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720
(808) 932-2900 • Fax (808) 932-2928

January 24, 2014

The Honorable Josh Green, Chair
Committee on Health
State Capitol
Conference Room 229
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Green:

Subject: S.B. 2348 Relating to Health

I am Darren J. Rosario, Member of the State Fire Council (SFC) and Fire Chief of the Hawai'i Fire Department (HFD). The HFD support S.B. 2348, makes an appropriation to establish and fund two special emergency medical response vehicle units based in Puna and Makalei on the island of Hawai'i, including acquisition of vehicles, equipment and personnel costs..

The EMS needs of the residents of Puna are centrally served by HFD Medic's 5 and 10 out of the Kea'au and Pahoia Fire stations respectively. These units are strategically based to serve the bulk of Puna's population handling 91% of EMS calls in Puna. Medic 19 out of the Volcano Fire Station serves a less populated area of Puna but fills a wide geographical gap (45 miles) between Kea'au and Ka'u.

- In 2007-2008 the Puna district accounted for 3,970 or 21% of all EMS calls in the County of Hawai'i.
- In 2013-2014 the Puna district accounted for 5,149 calls or 27% of all EMS calls in the County of Hawai'i.

The district of Puna is roughly the size of the Island of Kauai, has a population of 45,326 and has become one of the fastest growing districts in the State of Hawai'i with a population increase of 44% since 2000. Over the next 15 years the population of Puna is expected to grow to 75,000 nearly half the current population of Hawai'i Island.



Access to primary health care in Puna is challenging for the community, for many Puna residents primary care services are as much as 30 miles away, coupled with economic and transportation challenges EMS has become the access point for health care to many in Puna.

The volume of EMS calls have crept up year by year with no increase in EMS services to the Puna district; with the projected population increase this will no doubt continue and impact our ability to deliver high quality EMS services. As mentioned 911 EMS cases in Puna account for more than 27% of all 911 calls in Hawai'i County, to compound this, the round trip time from response to back in quarters on a patient transport is approximately two hours. It is become common for Medics 5 and 10 to have ten or more transports in a twenty-four hour shift the resulting simple math means; our personnel can essentially be on the road for nearly twenty-four consecutive hours. As a result the potential for fatigue, errors in judgment, driving and overall safety are of great concern for our personnel.

This increase in Puna's call volume is also having a collateral impact on two of our departments busiest units located in Hilo (Medic's 1 and 3) who respond to a combined 34 % of all Hawai'i County 911 EMS calls. Medic's 1 and 3 cover the Puna district when the Puna units are unavailable. Since 2007 there has been a 50% increase in responses from Medics 1 and 3 into the Puna District and there are numerous times when the majority of our East Hawai'i EMS assets Medics 1, 3, 5, 10, 19 are all covering calls in the Puna district leaving the most populated area (Hilo) without adequate services. This has resulted in increased 911 back costs to AMR. In the 2011 – 12 fiscal period we averaged nearly \$15,000 per month in 911 back up charges to AMR, and that figure is climbing steadily.

The new Makalei Fire Station in North Kona put into service in 2013, houses a Fire Engine and Hazardous Materials Response unit, the Makalei station fills a gap on Hwy 190 between the Kailua Fire Station and the Waikoloa Fire Station, serving a wide spread community of approximately 45,000 residents, also considered one of the fastest growing districts in the State of Hawai'i.

EMS response time significantly impacts the overall delivery time of the patient to definitive treatment at an emergency room. According to the National Fire Protection Association which creates standards for Fire Service has determined that an EMS Medic Unit crew must respond to a scene within eight minutes. According to NFPA 1710, "This requirement is based on experience, expert consensus and science. Many studies note the role of time and the delivery of early defibrillation in patient survival due to heart attacks and cardiac arrest, which are the most time-critical, resource-intensive medical emergency events to which fire departments respond." Trauma cases are also extremely time sensitive and rapid transport to definitive treatment often makes the difference between life and death.

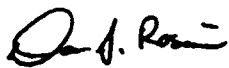
The Honorable Josh Green, Chair
January 24, 2014
Page 3

The current EMS response within the district comes from Medic 7 (8 miles away) out of the Kailua Fire Station, Medic 12 (15 miles away) out of the Keauhou Fire Station and Medic 16 (27 miles away) out of the Waikoloa Fire Station. Medic 7 and 12 account for 17% of the EMS calls in the County of Hawai'i and in the best circumstances will manage a response time of 8-15 minutes to the district of North Kona; if neither of these units are available the response time from Medic 16 in Waikoloa Village is approximately 25-30 minutes. To compound this the approximate transport time from North Kona to Kona Community Hospital is 25-30 minutes.

Given the current circumstances the outcomes of patients who have an injury or illness in which definitive treatment is time sensitive, the odds are stacked against them in North Kona.

This request is presented to meet the ever-increasing demands for Emergency Medical Services on Hawai'i Island specific to Puna and Kona (with collateral effects in Hilo), aiding our department in maintaining the highest level of EMS delivery to the community as its needs change.

Sincerely,



DARREN J. ROSARIO
County of Hawai'i Fire Chief, SFC Member

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [HTHTestimony](#)
Cc: jebersole@hawaiicounty.gov
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB2348 on Jan 27, 2014 13:30PM
Date: Sunday, January 26, 2014 9:44:11 AM

SB2348

Submitted on: 1/26/2014

Testimony for HTH on Jan 27, 2014 13:30PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jesse Ebersole	Hawaii Fire Department	Support	Yes

Comments: Will be present with Battalion Chief Lance Uchida representing the Hawaii Fire Department to answer questions regarding SB2348

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

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [HTHTestimony](#)
Cc: luchida@co.hawaii.hi.us
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB2348 on Jan 27, 2014 13:30PM
Date: Sunday, January 26, 2014 9:40:11 AM

SB2348

Submitted on: 1/26/2014

Testimony for HTH on Jan 27, 2014 13:30PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lance Uchida	Hawaii Fire Department	Support	Yes

Comments: Will be representing the Hawaii Fire Department to answer questions the committee may have regarding SB2348

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