
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HEALTH.

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

1 PART I

2 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the Puna district on
3 the island of Hawaii is approximately five hundred square miles
4 and according to a 2010 census, has a population of 45,326.
5 Puna has become the fastest growing district in the State, with
6 a population increase of forty-four per cent since 2000. Over
7 the next fifteen years the population of Puna is expected to be
8 approximately seventy-five thousand. This population growth has
9 significantly impacted the Hawaii county fire department's
10 emergency medical services medic units in Puna and Hilo.

11 The legislature further finds that the residents of Puna
12 are faced with various economic and transportation challenges.
13 Due to the risk of being inundated by lava, portions of Puna are
14 extremely vulnerable and threatened with inaccessibility.
15 Access to health care in Puna is also difficult because many
16 Puna residents are up to thirty miles away from the nearest
17 primary care provider.



1 The legislature additionally finds that the Hawaii county
2 fire department's emergency medical services has become the
3 health care access point for many Puna residents. From 2015 to
4 2016, the Puna district accounted for thirty per cent of
5 emergency medical service calls. Since 2007, there has been a
6 fifty per cent increase in responses from Hilo medic units into
7 the Puna district, leaving Hilo without adequate emergency
8 medical services. Based in the Keaau and Pahoia fire stations,
9 two emergency medical services units handle ninety-one per cent
10 of the emergency medical services calls from Puna residents and
11 the paramedics face progressive burnout due to long shifts.

12 The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds to
13 establish and staff an advanced life support medic unit in Puna
14 on the island of Hawaii.

15 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
16 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much
17 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2016-2017 to
18 establish and staff an advanced life support medic unit in Puna
19 on the island of Hawaii.

20 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
21 health for the purposes of this Act.



1 PART II

2 SECTION 3. The legislature finds that response times for
3 emergency medical services significantly impact the overall time
4 it takes to transport patients to the emergency room to receive
5 treatment. The National Fire Protection Association, which
6 creates standards for fire services, and has determined that
7 emergency medical services medic unit crews must respond to
8 scenes of emergency within eight minutes. According to the
9 association's publication, NFPA 1710: Standard for the
10 Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations,
11 Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations, "this
12 requirement is based on experience, expert consensus and
13 science. Many studies note the role of time and the delivery of
14 early defibrillation in patient survival due to heart attacks
15 and cardiac arrest which are the most time-critical, resource-
16 intensive medical emergency events to which fire departments
17 respond." Trauma cases are also very time-sensitive, and the
18 ability of emergency medical services crews to rapidly transport
19 patients to medical facilities for treatment often makes the
20 difference between life and death.



1 The legislature further finds that on the island of Hawaii,
2 North Kona's new Makalei fire station fills a firefighting gap
3 on highway 190 between the Kailua fire station and the Waikoloa
4 fire station. The Makalei station has a fire engine, is home to
5 a hazardous materials response unit, and serves a community of
6 approximately forty-five thousand residents in one of the
7 fastest-growing districts in the State. However, current
8 emergency medical services responses to North Kona come from the
9 medic seven unit based at the Kailua fire station, the medic
10 twelve unit based at the Keauhou fire station, and the medic
11 sixteen unit based at the Waikoloa fire station. These
12 facilities are located eight, fifteen, and twenty miles from
13 North Kona, respectively. Medics seven and twelve account for
14 seventeen per cent of the emergency medical services calls on
15 the island, and in the best circumstances will respond to North
16 Kona in eight to fifteen minutes. If neither of these units are
17 available, North Kona must rely upon medic sixteen, which
18 usually takes twenty-five to thirty minutes to respond.
19 Further, the approximate transport time from North Kona to Kona
20 community hospital is twenty to thirty minutes.



Report Title:

Emergency Medical Services; Puna; North Kona; Appropriations

Description:

Appropriates funds to establish and staff an advanced life support medic unit in Puna on the Island of Hawaii and for emergency medical services for North Kona. (HB2434 HD1)

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