



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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Testimony COMMENTING on HB 1616
RELATING TO HEALTH

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN M. MIZUNO, CHAIR
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Hearing Date: January 24, 2018 10:00AM Room Number: 329

1 **Fiscal Implications:** We appreciate the intent of HB 1616, and defer to the Governor's
2 Executive Budget request for the Department of Health's (DOH) appropriations and personnel
3 priorities. HB 1616 requests \$1,260,135 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
4 2018-2019 be appropriated to the DOH for one advanced life support ambulance to be: (1) Based
5 in Puna on the island of Hawaii; and (2) Used during daily peak hours from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00
6 p.m., and to include the acquisition of a vehicle and equipment and funding personnel costs for
7 state-certified emergency medical service personnel.

8 **Department Testimony:** The Department recognizes the significant challenges to providing
9 health care and emergency medical services to the expanding county of Hawaii. This measure
10 seeks to augment the Hawaii County emergency medical services system for the residents and
11 visitors of the county. DOH contracts with the Hawaii County Fire Department to operate 15
12 ground ambulances and one medical helicopter on the Island of Hawaii. According to the United
13 States Census figures, between 2010 and July 1, 2016, the population of Hawaii County
14 increased 4.5% from 185,079 to 193,680. No additional ambulances have been authorized for
15 Hawaii County since 2005.

16 The DOH Emergency Medical Services and Injury Prevention Branch meets regularly with all of
17 Hawaii's emergency service providers to review Hawaii's 911 response capabilities and system
18 challenges. This Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Provider group discusses the current
19 deployment of 911 ambulance resources statewide and assesses the need for any additional
20 ambulance units to meet the growing health and safety needs of Hawaii's residents and visitors.

1 Based on these discussions, the group identified Puna and surrounding areas of Hawaii County
2 one of areas of highest need.

3 These priorities were confirmed by examining Hawaii County ambulance response time data
4 from the DOH pre-hospital EMS database. The mandated DOH contracted response times for
5 Puna surrounding areas located in Hawaii County is 20 minutes or less. A review of EMS data
6 over a 7-year period (2010 – 2016) demonstrated that Puna area response times exceeded the
7 mandated 20 minute threshold between 16% - 39% of the time. Adding an additional ambulance
8 unit and personnel resources to this district would improve Hawaii County response times.
9 Should the legislature decide to increase services to the Puna area the Department recommends
10 the service hours be 24/7 to provide added flexibility to EMS personnel in emergency response.
11 The addition of 24/7 services would increase the funding needs to \$1.5 million per year.

12 The State’s investment in 911 ambulance services statewide in contracts with the counties for
13 EMS services totals approximately \$75 million with almost \$42 million from billing being
14 returned to the State’s General fund in FY 2017.

15 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HONOLULU EMERGENCY SERVICES DEPARTMENT
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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KIRK CALDWELL
MAYOR

JAMES D. HOWE, JR.
DIRECTOR

IAN T.T. SANTEE
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

January 23, 2018

The Honorable John M. Mizuno, Chair
The Honorable Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice-Chair
House Committee on Health and Human Services
House of Representatives
Twenty-Ninth Legislature
Regular Session of 2018

Re: HB1616 Relating to Health

Dear Chair Mizuno, Vice Chair Kobayashi, and Members:

The Honolulu Emergency Services Department, Emergency Medical Services Division, is in support of HB1616 with amendments.

The City and County of Honolulu Emergency Services Department is the contracted provider to the State of Hawaii Department of Health for Emergency Medical Services for the 992,605 residents and 5,461,880 (2016) visitors who live on and visit Oahu.

As one of the three contracted providers in the State we work cooperatively with the other providers to ensure the proper function and timely delivery of EMS services to all citizens and visitor in our State.

As a group we have determined that the current needs to ensure the timely and proper functioning of EMS services include new 24 hour ambulance units on Kauai, Hawaii, and Oahu. This determination of need is based primarily on the need to increase service to meet the increasing demands for service due to the following three populations:

- Continual annual increases in visitor arrivals and subsequent injuries sustained by this group while visiting our State requiring pre-hospital medical services (increased 10.45% since 2012 on Oahu),
- The annual increase in our senior population 65 years and older, our State policy of aging in place, and the significantly higher demand for pre-hospital emergency medical services as this population group ages (37.4% of total population on Oahu), and
- The high use demand placed on EMS services by our Homeless Population (4,940 on Oahu).

The Honorable John M. Mizuno, Chair
The Honorable Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice-Chair
January 23, 2018
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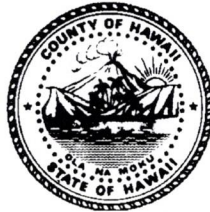
The current level of EMS service on Oahu has absorbed this increase in demand over the past 6 years but is experiencing annual declines in response time capability. Response time is critically important in survival outcomes for many pre-hospital medical emergencies including cardiac arrest, stroke, and major trauma.

As such the Honolulu Emergency Services Department is in support of HB1616, however, we would request that the Bill be amended to include one EMS unit for the Island of Oahu to meet the pressing need for increased pre-hospital emergency medical services as identified above.

Sincerely,


 James D. Howe, Jr.
Director

Harry Kim
Mayor



Wil Okabe
Managing Director

Barbara J. Kossow
Deputy Managing Director

County of Hawai'i Office of the Mayor

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January 22, 2018

Honorable John Mizuno
Chair, House Committee on Health and Human Services
Hawai'i State Capitol

Dear Chair Mizuno and Committee Members:

Re: HB 1616 Relating to Health [Puna ambulance]
Hearing Date: January 24, 2018

I strongly support HB 1616. A new ambulance for the Puna District of the Big Island would be of tremendous value, and there is little I can add to the preamble of HB 1616 which does an excellent job of laying out the case.

The district of Puna is the fastest growing district in the State; and thus, has increasing calls for emergency medical services. Currently, the high demand for Puna emergency services means Hilo ambulances need to travel to Puna for emergency calls. Hilo ambulances sometimes need to travel over thirty miles with some of those miles on substandard unpaved roads. Every Hilo ambulance that responds to a Puna emergency means one less ambulance available for Hilo, the second largest city in the State; and thus, an ambulance based in Puna not only benefits Puna, but also benefits the rest of East Hawai'i Island.

It takes an average round-trip of almost two hours to respond to each Puna emergency call. Emergency calls from Puna have increased to over five thousand calls per year. It is common for paramedics to have over ten transports in each work shift, which equates to twenty or more hours for each twenty-four hour shift. Because of this increase in calls, Hilo paramedic units, which are the busiest on the island, are often dispatched into the Puna district to cover the area when the Puna paramedic units are responding to other calls. This results in fewer Hilo paramedic units being available to respond to Hilo emergency calls.

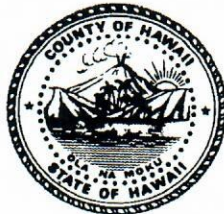
A new advanced life support ambulance will help reduce death and disability among residents and visitors alike. Please act favorably on HB 1616.

Respectfully submitted,

Harry Kim
Mayor, County of Hawai'i

Eileen O'Hara
Council Member
Council District 4

Chair: Environmental
Management Committee



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Vice Chair: Planning Committee and
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Hawaii County Council

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Honorable John Mizuno
Chair, House Committee on Health and Human Services
Hawai'i State Capitol

January 24, 2018

Aloha Chair Mizuno and Committee Members:

I am writing in strong support of HB 1616 and urging your approval of this important measure. As the County Council representative for lower Puna, and as a 35 year resident of the community, I can attest to the need for increased emergency medical services in the district.

Puna is the fastest growing district in the State, and currently relies on ambulances dispatched from Hilo to assist with the high volume of calls received daily. A new life support ambulance based in Puna will not only serve the Puna district, it will also mean less reliance on Hilo's limited resources.

Finally, Puna has a high rate of elderly and aging, a demographic that statistically relies more on emergency medical services. Residents and visitors alike will be served by the new ambulance and countless lives will undoubtedly be saved. Please approve HB 1616 in your committee and help to urge its passage throughout the legislative process.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "EO", with a small mark to the right.

Eileen O'Hara, County Councilmember

Hawai'i County, District 4

HB-1616

Submitted on: 1/23/2018 11:03:36 AM

Testimony for HHS on 1/24/2018 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Susan L.K. Lee Loy	Hawai'i County Council	Support	No

Comments:

January 23, 2018

Dear Chair Mizuno and Honorable Members of the Committee on Health and Human Services,

Please accept this brief testimony in strong support of House Bill 1616, appropriating funds for an advanced life support ambulance in Puna. Driving times in this fast-growing district can be an hour or more between some of the remote communities on the southeast coast and the nearest emergency room at Hilo Medical Center. In such situations, an ambulance such as that funded by HB 1616 *will* save lives. I thank your committee for hearing this measure and respectfully request your approval.

Sincerely,

Susan L.K. Lee Loy

Council Member, County of Hawai'i



HAWAII FIRE FIGHTERS ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS LOCAL 1463, AFL-CIO
1018 PALM DRIVE, HONOLULU, HAWAII 96814-1929
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WEBSITE: www.hawaii firefighters.org

LATE

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
THE TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION 2018**

January 24, 2018

Committee on Health and Human Services

**Testimony by
Hawaii Fire Fighters Association, Local 1463, IAFF, AFL-CIO**

H. B. No. 1616 RELATING TO HEALTH

The Hawaii Fire Fighters Association (HFFA), Local 1463, IAFF, AFL-CIO represents approximately 2,100 active-duty professional fire fighters throughout the State with more than 345 HFFA members serving in the County of Hawaii Fire Department – the only fire-based emergency medical service (EMS) among the four County Fire Departments and State Airport Rescue Fire Fighters.

HFFA **supports H.B. No. 1616** as Hawai'i Island has experienced a number of factors that justifiably warrants the need for the additional EMS units, including the increase in EMS call volume; population growth; and the sheer land mass of the island.

Access to primary and acute medical care within the Makalei and Puna areas have been chronically challenging as services are currently as much as 30 miles away for many residents. The volume of EMS calls have slowly increased each year without a correlated increase in EMS services to the areas and with the projected population growth, this will no doubt continue to impact the ability to deliver high quality EMS services to our Hawai'i Island residents.

The request presented in H.B. No. 1616 would aid not only our first responders in meeting the ever-increasing demands and needs for emergency medical services on Hawai'i Island, but it would also better serve our communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and HFFA respectfully requests favorable consideration of this measure.

HB-1616

Submitted on: 1/22/2018 11:11:09 PM

Testimony for HHS on 1/24/2018 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Scott Foster		Support	No

Comments:

Mahalo,

Scott Foster, Chair

The Kupuna Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai`i

HB-1616

Submitted on: 1/24/2018 7:55:08 AM

Testimony for HHS on 1/24/2018 10:00:00 AM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Blyth		Support	No

Comments: