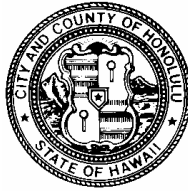


HONOLULU EMERGENCY SERVICES DEPARTMENT
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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LATE

KIRK CALDWELL
MAYOR



JAMES D. HOWE, JR.
DIRECTOR

IAN T.T. SANTEE
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

February 22, 2018

The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
The Honorable Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
The Senate
Twenty-Ninth Legislature
Regular Session of 2018

Re: SB2658 Making an Appropriation for Emergency Medical Services

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members:

The Honolulu Emergency Services Department, Emergency Medical Services Division, is in support of SB2658 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 statewide includes 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 Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
The Honorable Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice-Chair
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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. In 2013, the Division was capable of meeting or exceeding response time 86.1%. In 2017, the ability to meet or exceed response time was 78.1%.

As such, the Honolulu Emergency Services Department is in support of SB2658; 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,



For James D. Howe, Jr.
Director



HAWAII FIRE FIGHTERS ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS LOCAL 1463, AFL-CIO

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**THE SENATE
THE TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION 2018**

LATE

February 23, 2018

Committee on Ways and Means

Testimony by

Hawaii Fire Fighters Association, Local 1463, IAFF, ALF-CIO

S. B. No. 2658 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

The Hawaii Fire Fighters Association (HFFA), Local 1463, IAFF, AFL-CIO represents approximately 2,100 active-duty professional fire fighters throughout the State of Hawaii, with 349 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 – and 142 HFFA members serving in the County of Kauai Fire Department.

HFFA supports S.B. No. 2658 as both Hawai'i Island and Kaua'i have experienced a number of factors that justifiably warrants the need for the additional EMS units, including the increase in EMS call volume and population growth.

Specific to Hawai'i 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 and Kaua'i residents.

The request presented in S.B. No. 2658 would aid not only our first responders in meeting the ever-increasing demands and needs for emergency medical services on Hawai'i Island and Kaua'i, but it would also better serve our communities.

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

February 22, 2018



TO: The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
The Honorable Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Joanne Kealoha – jkealoha@ilwulocal142.org – (808) 864-1310

RE: **S.B. 2658 – Relating to Emergency Medical Services**

HEARING: Friday, February 23, 2018; 11:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means:

I am writing in **strong support** of S.B. 2658 for one additional ambulance unit each for Kauai County and Hawaii County—and to respectfully request that an amendment be considered to add **one more ambulance unit for the City & County of Honolulu.**

Like many Hawaii residents, I tended to take for granted the ambulance units and paramedics that rush to respond to medical emergencies in our communities. We think these ambulance units will be there for any and all emergencies, but the truth is that on Oahu, for example, the City & County has only 20 units to cover the whole island. If a unit assigned to a specific geographic area is pulled to another area, the next emergency in the original area may have to wait.

But I don't take ambulance units for granted any longer—not since last April when my husband suffered a cardiac arrest and needed emergency medical services himself. He collapsed and his heart literally stopped. I don't know how long he was without a pulse or oxygen to his brain, but thankfully, the EMS unit arrived within a few minutes and worked vigorously to revive him.

He was then rushed to Queen's Medical Center where ER and ICU personnel worked to preserve his brain function. When he awoke from an induced coma, he was transferred to Rehab Hospital where he received intensive physical, speech, and occupational therapy that allowed him to return home to his family and to his job. We are grateful to all the emergency and medical personnel who saved my husband's life.

But it all started with the first responders. Because they were able to respond so quickly, my husband not only survived but his brain function was pretty much restored to what it was before. He is one of the lucky ones.

Others are not so lucky. With only 20 ambulance units on Oahu, and units required to respond to all emergency requests, the chances of units responding to non-emergencies and delaying response to true medical emergencies is more than possible. Kauai and Hawaii Island counties have fewer ambulance units because of their population size, but the distances they travel may mean longer response times. The longer the brain is without oxygen, the greater the likelihood of permanent damage and disability.

Medical emergencies will only increase with our growing homeless and aging populations. Adding one ambulance unit to each of the three counties may be seen as cost-effective in the long run, not only in terms of sparing those who suffer medical emergencies from permanent debilitation and disability but also in avoiding the long-term costs for medical and rehabilitative care that the individuals and their families as well as the State may bear.

I humbly urge passage of S.B. 2658 and respectfully request that the bill be amended to include an appropriation for one ambulance unit for Oahu.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify on this measure and for considering the request.

LATE

SB-2658

Submitted on: 2/22/2018 11:39:56 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lisa Poulos	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Senators;

I support SB2658 which appropriates funds for ambulances for Kauai . I would also like to request that monies be appropriated for more ambulance units on Oahu.

Although there is bill SB2374 which provides a Community Paramedic Services Pilot Program; Establishes and appropriates funds for a three year community paramedic services pilot program which I hope will be part of the solution, this does not help the immediate issue of our Oahu EMS services being over being stretched to and beyond its limits.

Below is the news story from just last night on Hawaii News Now Thursday, February 15th 2018, 6:02 pm HST HONOLULU (HawaiiNewsNow)

Honolulu's plea for a new Emergency Medical Services station is on life support at the state Legislature. Given present resources, managers of Oahu's paramedics and emergency medical technicians say they're already stretched to the limit and they desperately need help in order to continue saving people's lives. "We really need help. We are in a critical stage where one of these days, we're not going to be able to respond to all the calls that we get in a timely manner," said Honolulu EMS Chief Dean Nakano. "I hate to say it, but one of these days, somebody is going to have to wait for an ambulance and the outcome is not going to be good. Nakano says there are only 20 ambulances on Oahu to serve nearly one million residents, plus around 10 million visitors annually. He says they simply can't keep up with the amount of calls. Our call volumes been going up steadily, at an average of 10,000 more calls each year, and we still have the same amount of ambulances," Nakano said. EMS officials say the last new ambulance they received was in 2012. Sometimes, Nakano says, they are stretched so thin that an ambulance from Hawaii Kai will get called out to Nanakuli. "At this point, we're not meeting our required response times, because like I said, we're stretched to the limit," he said.

From personal experience I know how overworked our EMTs and medics are. My daughter is a medic with the City and County. She regularly works past her shift filling

out paper work that she was not able to complete during her working hours because of the amount of calls they received. Often in a 12 hour shift they have 14 or more calls. She is often physically and emotionally drained by just the sheer number of calls they need to respond to; they have very little recovery time, if any before the next call comes in. I know there are many needs and we have a limited supply of funds, but we need to make sure our residents have the safety services they need and take care of our emergency medical providers so that we give the best care to all.

Mahalo for your thoughtful consideration,

Lisa Poulos