



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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Testimony COMMENTING on H.B. 1975 H.D. 1
RELATING TO EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

REPRESENTATIVE SYLVIA LUKE, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Hearing Date: February 21, 2020

Room Number: 308 1:30pm

- 1 **Fiscal Implications:** Unknown fiscal implications for the Department of Health.
- 2 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health (DOH) offers comments on H.B. 1975,
- 3 H.D. 1. This bill requires any county with a population greater than 500,000 that receives
- 4 funding pursuant to section 321-228, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to conduct an evaluation of the
- 5 finances and operations of the county's emergency medical services system. The only county
- 6 meeting the population criteria would be the City and County of Honolulu.
- 7 ACT 60 of the 2019 Legislature required a comprehensive review of the Hawaii Emergency
- 8 Medical Services (EMS) System. From October 14-18, 2019, the National Highway
- 9 Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) conducted a reassessment of the State EMS
- 10 System. The positive report made multiple recommendations to improve the system. Two of
- 11 the recommendations were: 1) Conduct a comprehensive cost analysis of the entire (all four
- 12 counties) EMS System, and 2) Establish a sustainable source of funding for the EMS and trauma
- 13 systems.
- 14 EMS is an essential public health service for Hawaii's residents and visitors. A sustainably
- 15 funded EMS system is required to meet this goal. A comprehensive cost analysis of the entire

- 1 EMS system is necessary to understand EMS funding requirements and realities and answer
- 2 continuing EMS funding questions. DOH respectfully recommends a statewide EMS cost
- 3 analysis study.
- 4 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HONOLULU EMERGENCY SERVICES DEPARTMENT
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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JAMES D. HOWE, JR.
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IAN T.T. SANTEE
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

February 21, 2020

The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
And Members
Committee on Finance
Hawaii State Capitol, #308
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Luke and Members of the Committee:

**SUBJECT: HB1975, HD1 Relating to Emergency Medical Services
Comments**

The Honolulu Emergency Services Department manages both the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and Ocean Safety Lifeguard Services Divisions (OSD) for the City and County of Honolulu.

The Department participated in the State of Hawaii Reassessment of the Emergency Medical Services System from October 14 – 18, 2019 conducted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

The Department is actively engaged with the State of Hawaii Department of Health on implementing the provisions of Act 140 (2019) which includes billing for non-transports, alternate destination transport, and the implementation of a community paramedicine program in the EMS system. In addition the Department concurs with the following recommendations from the NHTSA (2019) report in relation to this bill:

1. **REGULATION AND POLICY**

Each State should embody comprehensive enabling legislation, regulations, and operational policies and procedures to provide an effective Statewide system of emergency medical and trauma care and should:

- Require comprehensive EMS system planning;
- Establish a sustainable source of funding for the EMS and trauma system.

2. **HUMAN RESOURCES AND EDUCATION**

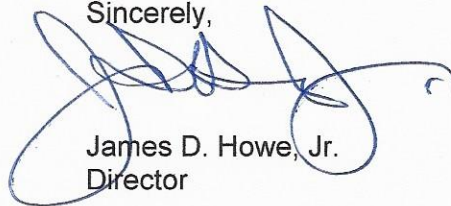
Each State should ensure that its EMS system has essential trained and certified/licensed persons to perform required tasks. These personnel include: first responders (e.g. police and fire), communications specialists, physicians, nurses, hospital administrators, and planners. Each State should provide a comprehensive Statewide plan for assuring a stable EMS workforce including consistent EMS training and recruitment/retention programs with effective local and regional support. The State agency should:

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- Conduct a comprehensive cost analysis of the entire EMS System. Based on this analysis revise the system to include looking at identification of centralized purchasing and other possible cost-saving measures.
- Develop a five-year strategic plan using the results from the work force and cost analysis studies.

The Department appreciates the opportunity to comment on this proposed legislation and a continuing dialog regarding the importance of EMS services in the State of Hawaii.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "James D. Howe, Jr.", written over a circular stamp or mark.

James D. Howe, Jr.
Director