

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



KENNETH S. HARA
MAJOR GENERAL
ADJUTANT GENERAL

STEPHEN F. LOGAN
COLONEL
DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
3949 DIAMOND HEAD ROAD
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96816-4495

OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 2474, HD1
RELATING TO EMERGENCY WORKERS

PRESENTATION TO
THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

BY

EVERETT S. KANESHIGE
STATEWIDE INTEROPERABILITY COORDINATOR

FEBRUARY 25, 2020

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen and Members of the Committee on Finance.

My name is Everett Kaneshige and I am the Statewide Interoperability Coordinator with the Office of Homeland Security at the State Department of Defense. Thank you for the opportunity for our office to submit testimony in **SUPPORT** of HB 2474, HD1.

This measure creates a definition for a "telecommunications dispatcher" and further classifies these individuals as an "emergency worker" under section 707-700 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes.

Telecommunications dispatchers play a vital role in partnership with their in-the-field first responder colleagues including police, firefighters, emergency medical services and other public safety personnel. Often these individuals face situations where individuals are in a great amount of distress, harm, fear, or injury. Each of them is called upon to fulfill skills they have learned during extensive training where communications with individuals during a variety of situations means coaching their callers through first aid, collecting important information to relay to officers, and negotiating persons out of difficult situations.

Currently, telecommunications dispatchers are usually classified as an office and administrative support occupation. As a result, these skilled personnel cannot be hired at a level of pay and benefits commensurate with their level of training and expertise. This bill represents an important first step to recognize the importance and specialized functions that telecommunications dispatchers perform on a daily basis so that they can receive the compensation, benefits and recognition that they deserve as first responders.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in Support of HB 2474, HD1.

Our office supports this measure as long as its implementation does not impact or replace the priorities set forth in the Executive Budget.

Everett S. Kaneshige; everett.s.kaneshige@hawaii.gov; 808-369-3523



HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

RANDY PERREIRA, Executive Director • Tel: 808.543.0011 • Fax: 808.528.0922

The Thirtieth Legislature, State of Hawaii
House of Representatives
Committee on Finance

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association

February 25, 2020

H.B. 2474, H.D. 1 – RELATING TO EMERGENCY WORKERS

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO supports the intent of H.B. 2474, H.D. 1 which amends the definition of “emergency worker” to include communications dispatchers.

H.B. 2474 appropriately adds telecommunications dispatchers, including police, fire, and emergency medical dispatchers to the definition of an emergency worker in the penal code under Section 707, Hawaii Revised Statutes. The inclusion of telecommunications dispatchers not only recognizes the efforts of our hard-working dispatchers who handle crisis situations at all hours of the day, but also honors their invaluable role as the unsung heroes in every emergency. Dispatchers must utilize multiple life-saving procedures and technologies to obtain critical information from a caller to make lightning fast decisions that could be the difference between life and death for our families and neighbors and deserve this recognition.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of H.B. 2474, H.D. 1.

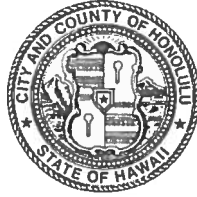
Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
Executive Director

POLICE DEPARTMENT
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

801 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET · HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
TELEPHONE: (808) 529-3111 · INTERNET: www.honolulu.org

KIRK CALDWELL
MAYOR



SUSAN BALLARD
CHIEF

JOHN D. McCARTHY
CLYDE K. HO
DEPUTY CHIEFS

OUR REFERENCE GK-AS

February 25, 2020

The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
and Members
Committee on Finance
House of Representatives
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 308
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Luke and Members:

SUBJECT: House Bill No. 2474, HD1, Relating to Emergency Workers

I am Gerald Kaneshiro, Major of the Communications Division of the Honolulu Police Department (HPD), City and County of Honolulu.

The HPD supports House Bill No. 2474, HD1, Relating to Emergency Workers.

This bill would classify telecommunications dispatchers belonging to a first responder agency as emergency workers. Currently, the telecommunications dispatchers are classified as white-collar workers. This bill recognizes them as emergency workers under the definition of Hawaii Revised Statutes 707-700.

There is also a federal bill (H.R. 1629) that reclassifies public safety telecommunicators as protective service occupations. This bill recognizes the important role of public safety dispatchers in directing emergency response and providing lifesaving instruction. They are they eyes and ears for the first responders. They are also highly trained to ask the right questions to properly assess the situation and communicate vital information to the responding officers.

The HPD urges you to support House Bill No. 2474, HD1.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

APPROVED:

Handwritten signature of Susan Ballard in cursive.

Susan Ballard
Chief of Police

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Gerald Kaneshiro in cursive.

Gerald Kaneshiro, Major
Communications Division

February 24, 2020

House Representatives - Finance Committee

We are Michael & Bonnie Kim and we both work as Police Radio Dispatcher's II with the Honolulu Police Department. We are writing this letter to support Senate Bill #2474 relating to Emergency Workers. We have a 39 combined years of service. This is an attendance critical position which requires each of our three watches to have a minimum number of employees to operate. When this number falls below that requirement (due to sick calls, personeel on vacation, injuries, etc) the previous watch personnel based on how many are needed could be mandated to stay for an additional four hours. This situation has been going on at least since we started working. We are also required to be mandated to work during natural diasters. The most recent in August 2018 when Hurricane Lane was posing a threat to the island of Oahu. We were told to be prepared to stay at the main police station, possibly for days if Oahu took a direct hit. There is no way that this position can be categorized as a "clerical worker"

Besides the position being attendance critical, there are many duties that we perform that keep the public safe on Oahu. A dispatcher must call upon their experience and training to decipher what needs to be done to render aid to the caller within seconds of picking up the phone line and skillfully relay this information to the Police Officers with our complex computer system.

*The kind of stress that Police Radio Dispatchers experience is not something the kind of stress that everyday people deal with. It has been said that we experience PTSD. This results after years of helping callers and officers who are experiencing difficult situations. We answer the phone calls not knowing what is coming on the other end. Sometimes it's silence and crying, people screaming and the sounds of someone getting beaten, a suicidal person asking for help & hoping the officer gets there in time or gunfire. This goes on for hours, days, weeks, years and a career. Cumulative stress can affect work performance, work attendance, personal relationships and social relationships, in addition to causing physical illness. A dispatcher is a first responder.

Police Radio Dispatchers are the life line to our Police Officers. We are at the other end of the radio for whatever they need. Recent events of January 19, 2020 have proved that our Police Radio Dispatchers are a vital link to our officers.

Police Radio Dispatchers exhibit extraordinary communicaton and computer skills while under extreme pressure and still remain calm and do our job. We work short handed and

still manage to make sure every call gets answered, every transmission from an officer gets acknowledged.

We are Police Radio dispatchers. We are Emergency Workers. We are First Responders.

Michael Kim

HPD Communications Division

Bonnie Kim

HPD Communications Division

..



MICHAEL P. VICTORINO
MAYOR

OUR REFERENCE
YOUR REFERENCE

POLICE DEPARTMENT

COUNTY OF MAUI

55 MAHALANI STREET
WAILUKU, HAWAII 96793
(808) 244-6400
FAX (808) 244-6411



TIVOLI S. FAAUMU
CHIEF OF POLICE

DEAN M. RICKARD
DEPUTY CHIEF OF POLICE

February 24, 2020

The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
The Honorable Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair
and Members of the Committee on Finance

House of Representatives
Hawaii State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: House Bill No. 2474 – Relating To Emergency Workers

Dear Chair Luke and Members of the Committee:

The Maui Police Department strongly SUPPORTS the passage of H.B. No. 2474.

Telecommunications Dispatchers, otherwise known as Emergency Services Dispatchers (ESD), are placed in critical, life-saving situations on a daily basis. Their career is just as demanding as Emergency First Responders. They work hand-in-hand with police officers, firefighters and paramedics around the clock, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. They are literally the lifeline between the public and First Responders.

Multi-tasking is a crucial and essential element of a dispatcher's everyday duties. Dispatchers are classified into two categories, a call taker and a dispatcher, as they are trained and certified to fill both roles.

As a call taker, they are required to obtain all pertinent information from the caller. At times the caller remains on the phone line with them until the First Responder arrives on scene. For example, there are situations where the person on the line is in a state of panic with a family member who is unresponsive and not breathing. The dispatcher will need to first establish a dialogue with the caller and skillfully calm the caller down and at the same time talk the individual through administering CPR. This task requires extraordinary concentration and ability, as every second counts, while at the same time maintaining composure.

As a dispatcher, they provide critical information to first responders entering a scene. For example, in a situation where an armed robbery has just occurred, it is

The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
February 24, 2020
Page 2

imperative that the dispatcher relay the correct information to the responding police officers, such as whether and what type of dangerous weapon was used in the commission of a crime. For obvious reasons, a dispatcher does not want an officer ambushed by a knife wielding, mentally unstable individual nor walk into a situation where gunshots are being fired.

Another arduous situation which dispatchers encounter involve a rapidly spreading residential fire. Dispatchers are required to pinpoint the exact location of the fire while handling multiple calls regarding the same incident or the calls may involve a different situation. Dispatchers would need to put the pieces of the puzzle together to determine what type of situation is occurring. Radio transmissions with the first responders and providing updates involving evacuation and road closures are also an essential part of their duties. Additional responding units and services with other agencies may also be required, which dispatchers are responsible for coordinating and dispatching.

The daily demand of a Telecommunications Dispatcher is clearly comparable to an Emergency Worker without a doubt. Therefore, it is imperative that the position of a Telecommunications Dispatcher be classified under the correct bargaining unit. This would enhance much needed recruitment and retention within this career field.

The Maui Police Department asks that you strongly SUPPORT the passage of H.B. No. 2474.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,


TIVOLI S. FAAUMU
Chief of Police

Chair Rep. Sylvia Luke

Vice Chair Rep. Ty J.K. Cullen

Committee on Finance Members Eli, Asuega Gates, Hashimoto, Holt, Kitagawa, Kobayashi, Matayoshi, Nakamura, Nishimoto, Todd, Wildberger, Yamashita, McDermott

Tracy L. Pellazar

Emergency Services Dispatcher

Maui Police Department, Communications Section

55 Mahalani St. Wailuku, HI 96793

(808)870-1490

Monday, February 24, 2020

Support of HB 2474 HD1, Relating to Emergency Works

My name is Tracy Pellazar and I'm an Emergency Services Dispatcher. I have been with the Maui Police Department going on 17 years now. From the beginning, we have been the main point of contact, the "hub" for all emergencies on the island (and in our county). We dispatch for all Police, Fire, and Medics, as well as answer 911 calls and Administrative Calls. Our workload has never lessened, but actually continues to increase as times change. We work alongside our fellow policemen, firemen, and medics, our shifts overlapping and intertwining. We are considered "first responders" by many, being that we are the first contact for any emergency. Several of our training courses, parallel those of our "on-the-road" responders. We too have saved lives, however, our life-saving incidents occur via the phone. We have assisted with giving birth, helped someone give CPR, given instructions on opening an airway, directed someone to a safe area, and much much more. We may not be physically on scene, but we have definitely had a part in these incidents. We do much more than people know, a lot is done behind the scenes.

Our job consists of a lot of multi-tasking. At any given time, we are answering 911s, dispatching units and relaying information to another agency, all at the same time. We do a lot of typing, however, our position should not be consider a "clerical" position. Our position incorporates a wide range of other job skills/duties with a more intense level of difficulty, and knowledge.

I fell in love with being an Emergency Services Dispatcher from the beginning, and I continue to love my job, and I'm considered one of our "lifers". It's not only a "job" but this is my life and alongside my fellow dispatchers, we take this position very seriously. We just want recognition where we feel it is due. I hope that you will consider my testimony in your decision.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration in this important matter, and allowing me to testify.

HB-2474-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2020 2:55:15 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2020 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dean Rickard	Maui Police Department	Support	No

Comments:

February 24, 2020

The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair

The Honorable Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair

and Members of the Committee on Finance

House of Representatives

Hawaii State Capitol

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: House Bill No. 2474 – Relating To Emergency Workers

Dear Chair Luke and Members of the Committee:

Telecommunications Dispatchers, otherwise known as Emergency Services Dispatchers (ESD), are our true “first responders” in all facets involving critical, life-saving situations on a daily basis. While the majority of their efforts are conducted behind the scenes that often go unnoticed, a Telecommunications Dispatcher’s career is just as demanding as any other Emergency First Responder. Telecommunications Dispatchers have the most critical role in providing emergency services to our community. They work hand-in-hand with police officers, firefighters and paramedics

24/7/365; and, are literally the lifeline between the public and First Responders. The daily demand of a Telecommunications Dispatcher is clearly comparable to an Emergency Worker without a doubt; therefore, it is imperative that the position of a Telecommunications Dispatcher be classified under the correct bargaining unit. This would enhance much needed recruitment and retention within this career field.

The Maui Police Department asks that you strongly SUPPORT the passage of H.B. No. 2474.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Dean M. Rickard

Deputy Chief of police

HB-2474-HD-1

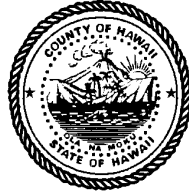
Submitted on: 2/21/2020 2:32:50 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2020 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Victor K. Ramos	Maui Police Department	Support	No

Comments:

Harry Kim
Mayor



Darren J. Rosario
Fire Chief

Lance S. Uchida
Deputy Fire Chief

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

February 24, 2020

The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
Committee on Judiciary
The House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 306
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Luke:

Subject: H.B. 2474, RELATING TO EMERGENCY WORKERS
Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 25, 2020
Time/Place of Hearing: 11:00 a.m., Conference Room 308

I am Darren J. Rosario, Fire Chief of the Hawai'i Fire Department of the County of Hawai'i (HCFD). The HCFD strongly supports HB 2474, which amends the definition of "emergency worker" in the Penal Code to include communications dispatchers.

Telecommunication dispatchers are an integral part of our response to emergency operations. They are the first contact made by a 911 caller for assistance. The HCFD dispatcher is trained and certified in Emergency Medical Dispatching (EMD). EMD allows for critical lifesaving task to be communicated to the 911 caller such as the proper placement of an unconscious victim, how to open an airway, and even CPR instructions as an example. These critical task, done prior to the arrival of emergency personnel is directly related to increasing lifesaving numbers.

Beginning in 2010 and ending in 2013, the County of Hawai'i furloughed all employees except for public safety employee in the fire and police departments. The Fire Radio Dispatcher was recognized as "essential workers" and while not being furloughed, received significant pay reductions. This very action between 2010 and 2013 further supports the position that a telecommunication dispatcher should be classified as an emergency worker. An emergency dispatcher is an integral part of the emergency response team to all incidents. The HCFD respectfully request your passage of HB 2474.

Please do not hesitate to call me at 932-2903 or darren.rosario@hawaiicounty.gov should you have any questions. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support.

Respectfully,

DARREN J. ROSARIO
Fire Chief



February 6, 2020

Honorable Representatives,

Re: **I support HB#2474**, Section 707-700, Hawaii Revised Statutes, amending the definition of “emergency worker”.

As a public servant of the County of Hawaii, Big Island, for **21** years, as a telecommunications Fire Dispatcher with the Hawaii [County] Fire Department, I support the Proposed HB#2474 concerning the amendment of the definition of emergency workers **to include communication dispatchers who in the course of their duty have to utilize a multitude of skill sets in order to ensure the situation is addressed as expediently and efficiently as possible.**

Our dispatch center is a fast paced, high stress environment and handles crisis situations at all hours of the day. I am the eyes and ears for the first responders and at times have to make lightning fast decisions that could be the difference between life and death. I am a nationally certified Emergency Medical Dispatcher who is highly trained and disciplined to ask the right questions to properly assess the situation and communicate vital information to the responding units and provide verbal medical direction to callers needing emergency services which includes guiding callers through the process of performing CPR and delivering babies. In doing so, I carry a lot of liability. I also manage all calls for emergency help during severe weather (ex: Hurricane Lane), natural disasters (ex: Leilani Lava Eruption) and ballistic missiles which I know Secretaries in our current bargaining unit does not do; And I share the responsibility to serve the public with professionalism and Aloha.

I humbly ask the Honorable Representatives for your support. Attached are copies of our County job descriptions Fire Radio Dispatchers I, II, III and Fire Communications Supervisor for your perusal.

Thank you very much for allowing me to submit testimony. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



SANDEE OZEKI

555 W. Kawaihina St.

Hilo, HI 96720

HB-2474-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2020 10:00:57 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2020 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Matt Loper	Hawaii Fire Department	Support	No

Comments:

February 23, 2020

Honorable Senators,

Re: I support SB#3000 & HB#2474, amending the definition of “emergency worker” in Section 707-700, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

I have been a firefighter for the County of Hawaii these past 10 years and I support the proposed SB#3000 and HB#2747 concerning the amendment pertaining to the definition of emergency workers to include communication dispatchers who in the course of their duty have to utilize a multitude of skill sets in order to ensure the situation is addressed as expediently and efficiently as possible.

Our dispatch center is a fast paced, high stress environment and handles crisis situations at all hours of the day. The job of a dispatcher has rapidly changed over the last decade from a person who answers a phone to get an address for response to a specialist who wears multiple hats. Some of the things they have to do include:

- Operating a multi-line telephone console system, alerting system, and TDD system for the deaf and hearing-impaired
- Determining and assigning the level of priority of the call and enter the data into a computer-aided dispatch system
- Performing emergency medical dispatch and crisis intervention services
- Asking vital questions and provide pre-arrival instructions for emergency medical calls
- Monitoring and operating a radio console and various computer equipment
- Receiving and responding to a variety of emergency and non-emergency services and complaints
- Asking questions to interpret, analyze and anticipate the caller’s situation as to resolve problems, provide information, dispatch emergency services, or refer callers to other agencies

- Dispatching and coordinating the responses of public safety agencies
- Identifying appropriate number and type of equipment or apparatus to dispatch

Training for their position lasts for over a year. The attrition rate is horrendous in every dispatch center in the State of Hawaii. The responsibility, level of expectation, stress and difficulty of the job are excessive. If any position deserves to be considered an emergency responder dispatchers definitely fall within that category.

Thank you very much for allowing me to submit testimony. Your support of this bill is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

FF Matt Loper

February 6, 2020

Honorable Representatives,

Re: **I support HB#2474**, Section 707-700, Hawaii Revised Statutes, amending the definition of “emergency worker”.

As a public servant of the County of Hawaii, Big Island, for **14** years, as a telecommunications Fire Dispatcher with the Hawaii [County] Fire Department, I support the Proposed HB#2474 concerning the amendment of the definition of emergency workers **to include communication dispatchers who in the course of their duty have to utilize a multitude of skill sets in order to ensure the situation is addressed as expediently and efficiently as possible.**

Our dispatch center is a fast paced, high stress environment and handles crisis situations at all hours of the day. I am the eyes and ears for the first responders and at times have to make lightning fast decisions that could be the difference between life and death. I am a nationally certified Emergency Medical Dispatcher who is highly trained and disciplined to ask the right questions to properly assess the situation and communicate vital information to the responding units and provide verbal medical direction to callers needing emergency services which includes guiding callers through the process of performing CPR and delivering babies. In doing so, I carry a lot of liability. I also manage all calls for emergency help during severe weather (ex: Hurricane Lane), natural disasters (ex: Leilani Lava Eruption) and ballistic missiles which I know Secretaries in our current bargaining unit does not do; And I share the responsibility to serve the public with professionalism and Aloha.

I humbly ask the Honorable Representatives for your support. Attached are copies of our County job descriptions Fire Radio Dispatchers I, II, III and Fire Communications Supervisor for your perusal.

Thank you very much for allowing me to submit testimony. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Leanne Kapahu

LEANNE KAPAHU

P.O. Box 11129

Hilo, HI 96721

HB-2474-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2020 5:00:46 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2020 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Richard Arias	Hawaii Fire Department	Support	No

Comments:

February 23, 2020

Honorable Representatives,

Re: **I support HB#2474**, Section 707-700, Hawaii Revised Statutes, amending the definition of “emergency worker”.

As a public servant of the County of Hawaii, Big Island, for **13** years, as a telecommunications Fire Dispatcher with the Hawaii [County] Fire Department, I support the Proposed HB#2474 concerning the amendment of the definition of emergency workers **to include communication dispatchers who in the course of their duty have to utilize a multitude of skill sets in order to ensure the situation is addressed as expediently and efficiently as possible.**

Our dispatch center is a fast paced, high stress environment and handles crisis situations at all hours of the day. I am the eyes and ears for the first responders and at times have to make lightning fast decisions that could be the difference between life and death. I am a nationally certified Emergency Medical Dispatcher who is highly trained and disciplined to ask the right questions to properly assess the situation and communicate vital information to the responding units and provide verbal medical direction to callers needing emergency services which includes guiding callers through the process of performing CPR and delivering babies. In doing so, I carry a lot of liability. I also manage all calls for emergency help during severe weather (ex: Hurricane Lane), natural disasters (ex: Leilani Lava Eruption) and ballistic missiles which I know Secretaries in our current bargaining unit does not do; And I share the responsibility to serve the public with professionalism and Aloha.

I humbly ask the Honorable Representatives for your support.

Thank you very much for allowing me to submit testimony. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

RICHARD P. ARIAS

P.O. Box 7419

Hilo, HI 96720

Email: richard.arias@hawaiicounty.gov

HB-2474-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2020 2:51:54 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2020 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jason Robello	Hawaii fire department	Support	No

Comments:

HB-2474-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2020 12:37:25 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2020 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melanie Keolanui	Hawaii Fire Department	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing to testify on behalf of the Dispatchers of the Hawaii Fire Department to be considered as Emergency Responders. They are the ones who answer the calls of persons from the community and they are an essential part of the chain of survival for medical emergencies. Without them there would be no clear communication to guide the response of ground units, and our safety may even be compromised because of this.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Melanie Keolanui

Fire Captain, Central Fire Station

Hawaii Fire Department

HB-2474-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2020 3:11:03 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2020 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Daniel James Carvalho	Hawaii Fire Department	Support	No

Comments:

HB-2474-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2020 3:56:44 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2020 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Matt Ho	Hawaii County Fire Department	Support	No

Comments:

HB-2474-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2020 2:59:19 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2020 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
steven tabura	hawaii county fire dept.	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Sylvia Luke
Vice Chair Ty Cullen
Members of Finance Committee

Davlynn Racadio
Maui Police Department, Emergency Communications
55 Mahalani Street, Wailuku, HI 96793
(808) 244-6338

Tuesday, February 25, 2020 at 11:00a.m.

SUPPORT of H.R. No. 2474, Relating to Emergency Workers

My name is Davlynn Racadio and I am a Supervising Emergency Services Dispatcher for Maui County. I started my career in July 1987, almost 33 years serving my Department, Community and emergency first responders. I would not change one day of my career. This is what I live and breathe: 9-1-1 service, locations and technologies.

9-1-1 Telecommunicators answer 9-1-1 calls, enter the case or cases into our Computer Aided Dispatch System (CADS) then dispatch them via radios, We keep track of all units we are responsible for: Police, Fire and Medics keeping them and the public safe. We send specialized units, chaplains, road/water crews, electric and cable, we send them the help that they need.

We have listened to gunshots, screaming ladies that found their husband's deceased – demanding that we bring them back to life, a person's last gasp of air and a brand new baby's first scream of life. We have sat at 9-1-1 radio positions taking a fire call then realizing it was their home and asking the investigator to find our loved ones.

Just because we work there, does not mean we are immune to what is going on in the world. We hurt and bleed in the same way as anyone else. But our biggest responsibility is to bring the police, fire and medics safely home at the end of shift.

We attend lengthy classroom and on the job training to build our knowledge, strengthen our mapping and locations skills, learn phone and computer training, multiple applications and certifications, law classes, boundaries training to differentiate between different police, fire and medical areas of responsibilities and we learn how to speak to people to calm them down so that the next decision they make will help us save their life.

Each County has different responsibilities but we all do the same job, we save lives and property. We are not clerks or secretaries. We work shift work to answer the 9-1-1 calls and send out the responders. The 9-1-1 calls could be from your families needing help. We will be there to answer their calls.

On behalf of the 9-1-1 Communications Centers of Maui County I humbly ask your support.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of HR2474.

Davlynn Racadio; Davlynn.Racadio@mpd.net ;808-244-6338.

HB-2474-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2020 1:35:49 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2020 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
lakea Tjomsland	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

Honorable Representatives,

I suport H.B NO.2474 HD1

I have been a police Dispatcher for Honolulu Police Department for twenty years. In my years of service, I've handled homicides ,shooting ,stabbing, home invasions, robberies, kidnapping, missing children , and an array of other type of cases. I receive calls for police service and need to determine what other types of service is needed at a scene whether it is fire or ems co response. We are the critical link between the public and the police.

While handing the call for service I have to use specific skills learned during a year long training. I have to get the information a caller is giving into the computer and send to the radio in less than a minute. We often have cases where a critical incident or time sensitive situation is going on and we need to get emergency assistance to the scene as soon as possible. Once we have assistance on the way we often have to continue to stay on the phone with the caller for in progress cases to get additional information for injuries, suspect information, and weapons. This information is critical for the safety of the agencies responding. During your shift you never know what kind of in progress case you going to have, where you are going to have to stay on the phone with the caller. I have had homicide suspects calling in they have just killed someone, people threating to jump off building or over passes, children calling that a grandparent isn't breathing, and people calling a suspect broke in the house & is still there. There are so many that we handle daily.

When working on the radio section we need to maintain the status of between 15 till 50 units (officers) depending on district and what type of incident is going on. You need to multitask, talk , type & listen all while units are talking and often running checks. Need to make sure all-important information is being correctly entered and time stamped while its occurring. Need to make sure you are giving responding units (officers) any additional information that is coming in verbal or via computer message.

Police Radio Dispatchers work 24/7 365 days a year. We are subject to consistently forced overtime on top of the volunteer overtime. We have to work during all emergencies. These are a few that I have had to work thru, hurricane, tsunamis, earth quakes, island wide power outages, phone service outage and ballistic missiles attacks.

The same hiring process Police officers go thru to become an officer is the same process a Police Radio Dispatchers goes thru. Those include a performance exam, personal history statement, back ground checks, criminal history checks, credit checks, psychological evaluations (written & verbal), polygraph test, medical exam, and a drug test.

This job is extremely hard to do. We have continuous recruitment, and many find the nature of work too hard and emotional draining to pass the one-year long training.

The Honolulu Police Department handles about one million calls for service yearly. The Communications center takes over 2000 calls a day. We have about ninety Police Radio Dispatchers and about 35 openings.

Thank you very much for allowing me to submit testimony. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Lakea Tjomsland

47-401 HUI IWA ST #4

KANEOHE HI 96744

808 753-2370

HB-2474-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2020 11:06:10 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2020 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Cheryl Brzezowski	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

February 21, 2020

Honorable Representatives,

Re: I support HB#2474, Section 707-700, Hawaii Revised Statutes, amending the definition of "emergency worker".

As a public servant of the County of Hawaii, Big Island for 15 years, as a telecommunications Fire Dispatcher with the Hawaii (County) Fire Department, I support the Proposed HB#2474 concerning the amendment of the definition of emergency workers to include communication dispatchers who in the course of their duty have to utilize a multitude of skill sets in order to ensure the situation is addressed as expediently and efficiently as possible.

Our dispatch center is a fast paced, high stress environment and handles crisis situations at all hours of the day. I am the eyes and ears for other first responders and at times have to make lightning fast decisions that could be the difference between life and death. I am a Nationally Certified Emergency Medical Dispatcher who is highly trained and disciplined to ask the right questions to properly assess the situation and communicate vital information to the units and provide verbal medical directions to callers needing emergency services which includes guiding callers through the process of performing CPR and delivering babies. In doing so, I carry a lot of liability. I also manage all calls for emergency help during severe weather (ex;Hurricane Lane, natural disasters (ex;Leilani Lava Eruption) and ballistic missiles which I know other clerical positions do not: and I share the responsibility to serve the public with professionalism and aloha. Overtime is mandatory.

I humbly ask the Honorable Representatives for your support.

Thank you very much for allowing me to submit testimony. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Humbly,

Cheryl L Brzezowski

168 Kuakolu Place

Hilo, HI 96720

February 6, 2020

Honorable Representatives,

Re: **I support HB#2474**, Section 707-700, Hawaii Revised Statutes, amending the definition of “emergency worker”.

As a public servant of the County of Hawaii, Big Island, for **3** years, as a telecommunications Fire Dispatcher with the Hawaii [County] Fire Department, I support the Proposed HB#2474 concerning the amendment of the definition of emergency workers **to include communication dispatchers who in the course of their duty have to utilize a multitude of skill sets in order to ensure the situation is addressed as expediently and efficiently as possible.**

Our dispatch center is a fast paced, high stress environment and handles crisis situations at all hours of the day. I am the eyes and ears for the first responders and at times have to make lightning fast decisions that could be the difference between life and death. I am a nationally certified Emergency Medical Dispatcher who is highly trained and disciplined to ask the right questions to properly assess the situation and communicate vital information to the responding units and provide verbal medical direction to callers needing emergency services which includes guiding callers through the process of performing CPR and delivering babies. In doing so, I carry a lot of liability. I also manage all calls for emergency help during severe weather (ex: Hurricane Lane), natural disasters (ex: Leilani Lava Eruption) and ballistic missiles which I know Secretaries in our current bargaining unit does not do; And I share the responsibility to serve the public with professionalism and Aloha.

I humbly ask the Honorable Representatives for your support. Attached are copies of our County job descriptions Fire Radio Dispatchers I, II, III and Fire Communications Supervisor for your perusal.

Thank you very much for allowing me to submit testimony. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Taylor Fujisawa

TAYLOR FUJISAWA

28 Kilua Road

Hilo, HI 96720

HB-2474-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2020 9:21:46 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2020 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alan Urasaki	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HB-2474-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2020 4:55:42 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2020 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Cheray Brzezowski	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As the daughter of an emergency dispatcher, I have seen, firsthand, the commitment and dedication of these workers. Not only in the importance of their public service, but in their continued education on medical protocol, geography, technology, rescue, hazardous materials, fire practices, communications and so much more. The level of knowledge that they have to retain, and continually maintain; far exceeds that of any "Clerical" position. Not only are these the FIRST first responders whom the public encounters; these dedicated civil servants work around the clock, through fires, disasters, floods, eruptions, and hurricanes; while trying to manage the public, as well as responding units. All this, with the knowledge that their families may be left without them. These employees also work with other agencies; such as, the Coast Guard, Civil Defense, DLNR, PTA, National Parks, and Airport Personnel (to name a few). Ultimately, they do these things well beyond and well above the level of a clerical worker.

I humbly ask for your support for this amendment. Not just for my parent, but for all dispatchers in the State, who continue to provide this level of commitment to the public.

Mahalo,

Cheray Brzezowski

Hilo, Hawaii

HB-2474-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2020 6:21:54 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2020 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Colby Sato	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As I've been living in Hawaii my entire life, I have seen countless friends and family serve the public as the "first" first responders. What these people sacrifice to make sure both ends of an emergency are taken care of is astounding. To call their work "clerical" is a massive understatement. Clerical is defined as , "1. (of a job or person) concerned with or relating to work in an office, especially routine documentation and administrative tasks". This public service is much more than that simple definition.

They are the first ones calming down parents when their child is in danger. They are the first ones giving panicked victims the instructions needed to stay alive or keep someone alive. They're the first ones talking people "off the ledge" when their mind's aren't right. They are the ones informing the other public servants of the situation so people remain safe and have the best chance at tomorrow.

They need to be recognized for all that they do and contribute. They are the unsung and often forgotten heroes and it's time they get the correct recognition. They may not be first on the scene but the truth is that it all starts with them. Please take a closer look at what these heroes do and give them what they have earned and deserve.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

February 9, 2020

Honorable Senators,

Re: **I support SB#3000**, Section 707-700, Hawaii Revised Statutes, amending the definition of “emergency worker”.

I am a firefighter of the County of Hawaii for 26 years, and I support the Proposed SB#3000 concerning the amendment of the definition of emergency workers **to include communication dispatchers who in the course of their duty have to utilize a multitude of skill sets in order to ensure the situation is addressed as expediently and efficiently as possible.**

Our dispatch center is a fast paced, high stress environment and handles crisis situations at all hours of the day. The job of a dispatcher has rapidly changed over the last decade from someone who answered a phone to get an address for response to a specialist who wears multiple hats. Some of the things they have to do are:

- Operate a multi-line telephone console system, alerting system, and TDD system for the deaf and hearing-impaired
- Determine and assign the level of priority of the call and enter the data into a computer-aided dispatch system
- Perform emergency medical dispatch and crisis intervention services
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- Ask questions to interpret, analyze and anticipate the caller’s situation as to resolve problems, provide information, dispatch emergency services, or refer callers to other agencies
- Dispatch and coordinate the responses of public safety agencies
- Identify appropriate number and type of equipment or apparatus to dispatch

Training lasts for over a year the attrition rate is horrendous in every dispatch center in the State of Hawaii. The responsibility, level of expectation, stress, and difficulty of the job are excessive. If any position deserves to be considered an emergency responder, our dispatchers deserve it.

Thank you very much for allowing me to submit testimony. Your support of this bill is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Mark Provencal

Captain Mark Provencal

Hawaii Fire Department, 2nd Battalion, North Kohala Fire Station, “C” Shift

February 9, 2020

Honorable Senators,

Re: **I support SB3000 and HB2474**, Section 707-700, Hawaii Revised Statutes, amending the definition of “emergency worker”.

I am a firefighter of the County of Hawaii for **16** years, and I support the Proposed SB#3000 concerning the amendment of the definition of emergency workers **to include communication dispatchers who in the course of their duty have to utilize a multitude of skill sets in order to ensure the situation is addressed as expediently and efficiently as possible.**

Our dispatch center is a fast paced, high stress environment and handles crisis situations at all hours of the day. The job of a dispatcher has rapidly changed over the last decade from someone who answered a phone to get an address for response to a specialist who wears multiple hats. Some of the things they have to do are:

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Thank you very much for allowing me to submit testimony. Your support of this bill is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Troy D. Gibson Sr.

Troy D. Gibson Sr.

FEO E-15 North Kohala Fire station

February 23, 2020

Honorable Senators,

Re: **I support SB#3000 HB NO.2474**, Section 707-700, Hawaii Revised Statutes, amending the definition of "emergency worker".

I have been a firefighter for the County of Hawaii these past 4 years and I support the proposed SB#3000 concerning the amendment pertaining to the definition of emergency workers **to include communication dispatchers who in the course of their duty have to utilize a multitude of skill sets in order to ensure the situation is addressed as expediently and efficiently as possible.**

Our dispatch center is a fast paced, high stress environment and handles crisis situations at all hours of the day. The job of a dispatcher has rapidly changed over the last decade from a person who answers a phone to get an address for response to a specialist who wears multiple hats. Some of the things they have to do include:

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- Dispatching and coordinating the responses of public safety agencies
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Training for their position lasts for over a year. The attrition rate is horrendous in every dispatch center in the State of Hawaii. The responsibility, level of expectation, stress and difficulty of the job are excessive. If any position deserves to be considered an emergency responder dispatchers definitely fall within that category.

Thank you very much for allowing me to submit testimony. Your support of this bill is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

FF M. Baum Station 15 "C" Platoon

February 23, 2020

Honorable Senators,

Re: **I support SB#3000 HB NO.2474**, Section 707-700, Hawaii Revised Statutes, amending the definition of "emergency worker".

I have been a firefighter for the County of Hawaii these past 1 years and I support the proposed SB#3000 concerning the amendment pertaining to the definition of emergency workers **to include communication dispatchers who in the course of their duty have to utilize a multitude of skill sets in order to ensure the situation is addressed as expediently and efficiently as possible.**

Our dispatch center is a fast paced, high stress environment and handles crisis situations at all hours of the day. The job of a dispatcher has rapidly changed over the last decade from a person who answers a phone to get an address for response to a specialist who wears multiple hats. Some of the things they have to do include:

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Thank you very much for allowing me to submit testimony. Your support of this bill is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

FF N. Hiro Station 15 "C" Platoon

HB-2474-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2020 12:09:02 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2020 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
LeShey	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

February 24, 2020

Honorable Representatives,

Re: **I support HB#2474**, Section 707-700, Hawaii Revised Statutes, amending the definition of “emergency worker”.

As a public servant of the County of Hawaii, Big Island, for **1.5** years, as a telecommunications Fire Dispatcher with the Hawaii [County] Fire Department, I support the Proposed HB#2474 concerning the amendment of the definition of emergency workers **to include communication dispatchers who in the course of their duty have to utilize a multitude of skill sets in order to ensure the situation is addressed as expediently and efficiently as possible.**

Our dispatch center is a fast paced, high stress environment and handles crisis situations at all hours of the day. I am the eyes and ears for the first responders and at times have to make lightning fast decisions that could be the difference between life and death. I am a nationally certified Emergency Medical Dispatcher who is highly trained and disciplined to ask the right questions to properly assess the situation and communicate vital information to the responding units and provide verbal medical direction to callers needing emergency services which includes guiding callers through the process of performing CPR and delivering babies. In doing so, I carry a lot of liability. I also manage all calls for emergency help during severe weather (ex: Hurricane Lane), natural disasters (ex: Leilani Lava Eruption) and ballistic missiles which I know Secretaries in our current bargaining unit does not do; And I share the responsibility to serve the public with professionalism and Aloha.

I humbly ask the Honorable Representatives for your support. Attached are copies of our County job descriptions Fire Radio Dispatchers I, II, III and Fire Communications Supervisor for your perusal.

Thank you very much for allowing me to submit testimony. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

LESHEY MAKUAKANE

2621 Kinai St.

Hilo, HI 96720

HB-2474-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2020 7:41:43 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2020 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Aaron	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing in support of HB2474. As a police officer who frequently assists our dispatchers due to their overwhelming manpower shortage, I understand the importance of this bill. Our dispatchers work incredibly hard and I credit the remaining ones for sticking with it despite having to work regular double shifts. They deserve to have proper recognition and any law that does this is great.

February 9, 2020

Honorable Senators,

Re: **I support SB#3000**, Section 707-700, Hawaii Revised Statutes, amending the definition of “emergency worker”.

I am a firefighter of the County of Hawaii for **26** years, and I support the Proposed SB#3000 concerning the amendment of the definition of emergency workers **to include communication dispatchers who in the course of their duty have to utilize a multitude of skill sets in order to ensure the situation is addressed as expediently and efficiently as possible.**

Our dispatch center is a fast paced, high stress environment and handles crisis situations at all hours of the day. The job of a dispatcher has rapidly changed over the last decade from someone who answered a phone to get an address for response to a specialist who wears multiple hats. Some of the things they have to do are:

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Training lasts for over a year the attrition rate is horrendous in every dispatch center in the State of Hawaii. The responsibility, level of expectation, stress, and difficulty of the job are excessive. If any position deserves to be considered an emergency responder, our dispatcher deserve it.

Thank you very much for allowing me to submit testimony. Your support of this bill is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Mike Matsui (retired)

February 23, 2020

Honorable Senators,

Re: **I support SB#3000 & HB#2474**, amending the definition of “emergency worker” in Section 707-700, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

I have been a Fire Radio Dispatcher for the County of Hawaii these past **16** years and I support the proposed SB#3000 and HB#2747 concerning the amendment pertaining to the definition of emergency workers to include communication dispatchers who in the course of their duty have to utilize a multitude of skill sets in order to ensure the situation is addressed as expediently and efficiently as possible.

Our dispatch center is a fast paced, high stress environment and handles crisis situations at all hours of the day. The job of a dispatcher has rapidly changed over the last decade from a person who answers a phone to get an address for response to a specialist who wears multiple hats. Some of the things they have to do include:

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Training for their position lasts for over a year. The attrition rate is horrendous in every dispatch center in the State of Hawaii. The responsibility, level of expectation, stress and difficulty of the job are excessive. If any position deserves to be considered an emergency responder dispatchers definitely fall within that category.

Thank you very much for allowing me to submit testimony. Your support of this bill is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

FRDII Tasha C. Kodani

HB-2474-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2020 10:34:01 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2020 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Robert Fujitake	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am submitting testimony in support of amending the definition of "emergency worker" in the Penal Code to include communications dispatchers.

Communications Dispatchers work 24/7 to ensure that emergency services are provided to the citizens and visitors of our state. They are the "first"-first responders for all emergency calls that come in to our dispatch centers. For every call received they are tasked with making critical decisions that affect the type of response provided. The job that they do every day plays a vital role in getting our police, fire and EMS personnel to those in need of help, with the accurate information included for each call received.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Fujitake

February 24, 2020

Honorable Senators,

Re: **I support SB#3000**, Section 707-700, Hawaii Revised Statutes, amending the definition of “emergency worker”.

I am a Fire Radio Dispatcher in the County of Hawaii for 4 years, and I support the Proposed SB#3000 concerning the amendment of the definition of emergency workers **to include communication dispatchers who in the course of their duty have to utilize a multitude of skill sets in order to ensure the situation is addressed as expediently and efficiently as possible.**

Our dispatch center is a fast paced, high stress environment and handles crisis situations at all hours of the day. The job of a dispatcher has rapidly changed over the last decade from someone who answered a phone to get an address for response to a specialist who wears multiple hats. Some of the things they have to do are:

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Training lasts for over a year the attrition rate is horrendous in every dispatch center in the State of Hawaii. The responsibility, level of expectation, stress, and difficulty of the job are excessive. If any position deserves to be considered an emergency responder, our dispatcher deserve it.

Thank you very much for allowing me to submit testimony. Your support of this bill is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Loren Kahakua (Fire Radio Dispatcher II)

HB-2474-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2020 11:29:12 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2020 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jacob Nixon	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

February 24, 2020

Honorable Senators,

Re: **I support SB#3000 & HB#2474**, amending the definition of “emergency worker’ in Section 707-700, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

I have been a fire dispatcher for the County of Hawaii these past 5 years and I support the proposed SB#3000 and HB#2747 concerning the amendment pertaining to the definition of emergency workers to include communication dispatchers who in the course of their duty have to utilize a multitude of skill sets in order to ensure the situation is addressed as expediently and efficiently as possible.

We are THE FIRST RESPONDERS. We are the first to talk to and help someone who is often having the worst day of their life. We give lifesaving instructions over the phone before units get on scene with them. We make sure they can be found in the first place. We make sure the units responding are aware of any dangers. We hear people take their last breaths while on the phone, we launch assets such as helicopters immediately without checking with anyone else, split second decisions we make can mean life and death. We cannot go home until we are relieved by another dispatcher. In times of natural disaster and other emergencies we are recalled and or not allowed to leave our post, we stay and we perform our duties of helping the public. We work long and hard hours keeping the center staffed 24/7, training is long and retention is poor. Please pass this bill, I hope that it will be a step in the right direction and help us dispatchers get the recognition and compensation that we deserve.

Thank you very much for allowing me to submit testimony. Your support of this bill is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Jacob Nixon

HB-2474-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2020 12:25:00 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2020 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Riley Ehukai Archibald	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

February 23, 2020

Honorable Senators,

Re: I support SB#3000 & HB#2474, amending the definition of “emergency worker” in Section 707-700, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

I have been a firefighter for the County of Hawaii these past 7 years and I support the proposed SB#3000 and HB#2747 concerning the amendment pertaining to the definition of emergency workers to include communication dispatchers who in the course of their duty have to utilize a multitude of skill sets in order to ensure the situation is addressed as expediently and efficiently as possible.

Our dispatch center is a fast paced, high stress environment and handles crisis situations at all hours of the day. The job of a dispatcher has rapidly changed over the last decade from a person who answers a phone to get an address for response to a specialist who wears multiple hats. Some of the things they have to do include:

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Training for their position lasts for over a year. The attrition rate is horrendous in every dispatch center in the State of Hawaii. The responsibility, level of expectation, stress and difficulty of the job are excessive. If any position deserves to be considered an emergency responder dispatchers definitely fall within that category.

Thank you very much for allowing me to submit testimony. Your support of this bill is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

FF R. Archibald

LATE

HB-2474-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2020 5:51:32 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2020 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jonathon Ucker	HFD	Support	No

Comments:

STATE OF HAWAI‘I
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

LATE

Testimony of the Office of the Public Defender,
State of Hawai‘i to the House Committee on Finance

February 24, 2020

S.B. No. 2474, HD1: RELATING TO EMERGENCY WORKERS

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Members of the Committee:

The Office of the Public Defender opposes H.B. No. 2474, HD1. This measure expands Section 707-700 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes adds additional qualifying occupations to the definition of an “emergency worker” to the ever-growing number of occupations which have been singled out for special protection against assaults in the normal course of their employment. The expansion of this definition will directly impact Section 707-712.7 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes – the offense of Assault Against an Emergency Worker. This statute elevates a misdemeanor Assault to a Class B felony.

While we understand the desire to carve out special protections for certain classes of individuals who are assaulted in the normal course of their employment, this measure is just another example of the expansion of misdemeanor level assaults to felony level assaults -- **not** based on the act itself but based on the job description of the victim. Over the years, this list of qualifying occupations has steadily grown to include many special categories and specific occupations.

It is our position that **all** employees should feel safe as they go about performing their requisite duties. As we have cautioned in the past, we believe that with the passage of time, more and more special categories and occupations will be added to this list. As the list grows, additional employees and groups will be asking whether they should request special consideration and be included for special protection.

We believe the flood gates of special protection requests are already open as each year we see the growing list of special employment categories to the assault statute elevating a simple misdemeanor assault to felony level status. We urge caution and we ask the Legislature to reevaluate the necessity for this measure and the necessity of expanding this ever-growing list. It is no small matter to be thrust into Circuit Court to face a felony charge for actions that would be treated as a misdemeanor in most other situations.

Of particular concern with H.B. 2474, HD1 is the inclusion of emergency personnel who are not on the ground or out in the community during emergencies or disasters. We applaud the work of 911 Operators and Emergency Dispatchers and we understand that their work is essential and critical during an emergency. However, these personnel are not on-site or in the field during an event, their location from a caller is remote, they work in controlled office environments, and they are not in need of special protection like first responders – our police officers, our firefighters, our EMT responders, or members of our

National Guard. A 911 operator who operates a “9-1-1 automated terminal” is not actively managing people face-to-face and in-person. We submit that a 911 Operator or an Emergency Dispatcher should not be included in the definition of an “emergency worker” for purposes of application to Section 707-712.7 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

February 23, 2020

LATE

Honorable Senators,

Re: **I support SB#3000 & HB#2474**, amending the definition of “emergency worker’ in Section 707-700, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

I have been a firefighter for the County of Hawaii these past 20 years and I support the proposed SB#3000 and HB#2747 concerning the amendment pertaining to the definition of emergency workers to include communication dispatchers who in the course of their duty have to utilize a multitude of skill sets in order to ensure the situation is addressed as expediently and efficiently as possible.

Our dispatch center is a fast paced, high stress environment and handles crisis situations at all hours of the day. The job of a dispatcher has rapidly changed over the last decade from a person who answers a phone to get an address for response to a specialist who wears multiple hats. Some of the things they have to do include:

- Operating a multi-line telephone console system, alerting system, and TDD system for the deaf and hearing-impaired
- Determining and assigning the level of priority of the call and enter the data into a computer-aided dispatch system
- Performing emergency medical dispatch and crisis intervention services
- Asking vital questions and provide pre-arrival instructions for emergency medical calls
- Monitoring and operating a radio console and various computer equipment
- Receiving and responding to a variety of emergency and non-emergency services and complaints
- Asking questions to interpret, analyze and anticipate the caller’s situation as to resolve problems, provide information, dispatch emergency services, or refer callers to other agencies
- Dispatching and coordinating the responses of public safety agencies
- Identifying appropriate number and type of equipment or apparatus to dispatch

Training for their position lasts for over a year. The attrition rate is horrendous in every dispatch center in the State of Hawaii. The responsibility, level of expectation, stress and difficulty of the job are excessive. If any position deserves to be considered an emergency responder dispatchers definitely fall within that category.

Thank you very much for allowing me to submit testimony. Your support of this bill is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Chad Toyomura

Battalion Chief

Hawaii County Fire Department

LATE

HB-2474-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2020 9:06:03 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2020 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ian Smith	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am submitting this testimony as an individual and my opinion is not the official stance of Hawaii Fire Department. As an Operations Battalion Chief with Hawaii Fire Department, however, I witness on a daily basis the critical role that our Emergency Dispatchers play in the emergency response system. They are far more than just support or clerical staff. The decisions that dispatchers make not only impact the lives of the callers, but the lives of first responders as well. At any given moment, they could be rerouting critical lifesaving resources to a difficulty breathing call, or providing instructions for cardio-pulmonary resuscitation, or filtering out and providing our response units with information that could prevent them from walking in to a potentially life-threatening situation.

Initial and ongoing training is a vital part of a 911 dispatcher's career, and these requirements clearly demonstrate that dispatchers must possess a level of knowledge and education that far exceeds what is generally required of administrative personnel. This is a specialized position that requires skilled professionals to use extensive training to make quick decisions in life or death situations.

I strongly urge the legislature to the adopt the language as stated in item 7, Section 1 "Emergency Worker" definition in HB2474.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ian Smith

Operations Battalion Chief, East Hawaii

Hawaii Fire Department

LATE

February 23, 2020

Honorable Senators,

Re: **I support SB#3000 & HB#2474**, amending the definition of “emergency worker’ in Section 707-700, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

I have been a firefighter for the County of Hawaii these past 25 years and I support the proposed SB#3000 and HB#2747 concerning the amendment pertaining to the definition of emergency workers to include communication dispatchers who in the course of their duty have to utilize a multitude of skill sets in order to ensure the situation is addressed as expediently and efficiently as possible.

Our dispatch center is a fast paced, high stress environment and handles crisis situations at all hours of the day. The job of a dispatcher has rapidly changed over the last decade from a person who answers a phone to get an address for response to a specialist who wears multiple hats. Some of the things they have to do include:

- Operating a multi-line telephone console system, alerting system, and TDD system for the deaf and hearing-impaired
- Determining and assigning the level of priority of the call and enter the data into a computer-aided dispatch system
- Performing emergency medical dispatch and crisis intervention services
- Asking vital questions and provide pre-arrival instructions for emergency medical calls
- Monitoring and operating a radio console and various computer equipment
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- Dispatching and coordinating the responses of public safety agencies
- Identifying appropriate number and type of equipment or apparatus to dispatch

Training for their position lasts for over a year. The attrition rate is horrendous in every dispatch center in the State of Hawaii. The responsibility, level of expectation, stress and difficulty of the job are excessive. If any position deserves to be considered an emergency responder dispatchers definitely fall within that category.

Thank you very much for allowing me to submit testimony. Your support of this bill is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Randall Masutomi

LATE

HB-2474-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2020 7:15:09 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2020 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Christopher	Hawaii Fire Department	Support	No

Comments:

February 9, 2020

Honorable Senators,

Re: **I support HB2474**, Section 707-700, Hawaii Revised Statutes, amending the definition of “emergency worker”.

I am a firefighter of the County of Hawaii for 1 year, and I support the Proposed HB2474 concerning the amendment of the definition of emergency workers **to include communication dispatchers who in the course of their duty have to utilize a multitude of skill sets in order to ensure the situation is addressed as expediently and efficiently as possible.**

Our dispatch center is a fast paced, high stress environment and handles crisis situations at all hours of the day. The job of a dispatcher has rapidly changed over the last decade from someone who answered a phone to get an address for response to a specialist who wears multiple hats. Some of the things they have to do are:

- Operate a multi-line telephone console system, alerting system, and TDD system for the deaf and hearing-impaired
- Determine and assign the level of priority of the call and enter the data into a computer-aided dispatch system
- Perform emergency medical dispatch and crisis intervention services
- Ask vital questions and provide pre-arrival instructions for emergency medical calls
- Monitor and operate a radio console and computer equipment
- Receive and respond to a variety of emergency and non-emergency services and complaints
- Ask questions to interpret, analyze and anticipate the caller’s situation as to resolve problems, provide information, dispatch emergency services, or refer callers to other agencies

- Dispatch and coordinate the responses of public safety agencies
- Identify appropriate number and type of equipment or apparatus to dispatch

Training lasts for over a year the attrition rate is horrendous in every dispatch center in the State of Hawaii. The responsibility, level of expectation, stress, and difficulty of the job are excessive. If any position deserves to be considered an emergency responder, our dispatcher deserve it.

Thank you very much for allowing me to submit testimony. Your support of this bill is greatly appreciated.

Aloha,

Christopher Tsamoydakis

LATE

HB-2474-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2020 4:28:09 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2020 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Tiffany Thom	Individual	Support	No

Comments: