

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



KENNETH S. HARA
MAJOR GENERAL
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STEPHEN F. LOGAN
COLONEL
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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 73, HD1
RELATING TO EMERGENCY WORKERS

PRESENTATION TO
THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

BY

EVERETT S. KANESHIGE
STATEWIDE INTEROPERABILITY COORDINATOR

MARCH 2, 2021

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 73, 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 73, 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



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

WRITTEN
TESTIMONY ONLY

**Testimony COMMENTING on HB0073_HD1
RELATING TO EMERGENCY WORKERS**

**REPRESENTATIVE SYLVIA LUKE, CHAIR
REPRESENTATIVE TY J.K. CULLEN, VICE CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

Hearing Date: 3/2/2021

Room Number: Via Videoconference

- 1 **Fiscal Implications:** This measure may impact the priorities identified in the Governor's Executive
- 2 Budget Request for the Department of Health's (Department) appropriations and personnel priorities.
- 3 **Department Testimony:** The Department supports this measure.
- 4 Under Hawaii Revised Statutes Title 10 §128D Environmental Response Law, a State On-Scene
- 5 Coordinator is designated by the Hawaii Director of Health as authorized by the Governor to
- 6 coordinate and direct State emergency response actions to hazardous substance release incidents
- 7 throughout the State. Hazardous substance(s) include chemical, oil, medical waste, radioactive and
- 8 biological materials, or pollutants and contaminants that cause or pose a threat to human health
- 9 and/or the environment. State On-Scene Coordinators work alongside hazardous material firefighter,
- 10 law enforcement officer, or any other emergency response personnel in an environmental emergency
- 11 response incident.
- 12 Hawaii State Hospital telephone operators conduct the same roles and responsibilities of a County
- 13 telecommunications dispatcher such as obtaining concise important information from a caller,
- 14 analyzing the information given and accurately communicating the information to the appropriate
- 15 recipient in a time-critical manner.
- 16 **Offered Amendments:** None
- 17 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

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

March 2, 2021

H.B. No. 73 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. 73 HD1.

This measure expands HRS § 707-700 by including 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 the offense of Assault Against an Emergency Worker, in violation of HRS § 707-712.7. 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.

During the House Committee Hearing on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs for HB73 on February 4, 2021, Vice Chair Matayoshi stated the intent of this bill is to provide 911 operators and communication dispatchers with increased benefits. If this is the case, then we respectfully ask this Committee to add language in the measure that expressly states that these additional employees are not included in the definition of an “emergency worker” for purposes of application to HRS § 707-712.7.

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, 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 themselves whether they should request special consideration and be included for special protection.

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. No. 73 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, on-scene coordinators, and telecommunications dispatchers and we understand that their work is essential and critical during an emergency. However, these personnel are not in-the-field during an event, their location from callers to emergencies is remote. They work in controlled office environments and they are not in need of special protection like in-the-field first responders -- our police officers, our firefighters, our EMT responders, or members of our National Guard. A 911 operator or a communication dispatcher who operates a “9-1-1 automated terminal” is not actively managing people face-to-face and in-person in-the-field. We submit that a 911 operator, on-scene coordinators, and state hospital operators who are located in a secure office building far from actual on-site operations should not be included in the definition of an “emergency worker” for purposes of application to HRS § 707-712.7.

Enhancing the penalties (i.e., elevating a misdemeanor offense to a Class B felony) will not keep 911 operators, on-scene coordinators and state hospital operators safer, will not deter crime, and will only serve to fuel mass incarceration. Data and research show that increasing the severity of punishment does little to deter crime. Laws and policies designed to deter crime by focusing mainly on increasing the severity of punishment are ineffective.¹ Not only do more severe punishments not deter crime, but longer periods of incarceration exacerbate recidivism.² The consequences of a felony criminal conviction are far-reaching and pose barriers to reentry long after a sentence has been served. These collateral consequences make it far more difficult to find employment, housing, and seek higher education and are

¹ National Institute of Justice, “Five Things About Deterrence.” *See* <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/five-things-about-deterrence>

² Prison Policy Initiative, “Recidivism and Reentry.” *See* https://www.prisonpolicy.org/research/recidivism_and_reentry/

not limited to individuals; they are experienced by families and communities, for generations to come.³

Finally, enhanced penalties have additional consequences that harm communities in the long run and fuel mass incarceration. Our jails and prisons are filled above not only design capacity but also operational capacity. A significant portion of the State's prison population are incarcerated in a contracted private, for-profit prison in Arizona; they are exiled thousands of miles away from their families, friends and crucial support networks. According to a recent study by the Prison Policy Initiative, in 2018, Hawai'i had an incarceration rate of 487 per 100,000 people.⁴ Although Hawai'i ranked 37th among the 50 states, if every state were an independent nation, Hawai'i would have the 43rd highest incarceration rate in the world.⁵ Only three foreign countries have a higher incarceration rate than Hawai'i.⁶ Thus, Hawai'i locks up a higher percentage of its people than many wealthy democracies do.⁷

We all want safe workplaces and to feel protected and secure. Violence against any employee threatens that, and we have a responsibility to stop, prevent, and condemn violence in any form. But expanding HRS § 707-700 and enhancing penalties for conduct based on the job description of the victim and not the act does not do that. There are already adequate laws that ensure that those who compromise 911 operators, on-scene coordinators, and telecommunications dispatchers' safety are penalized.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

³ Prison Policy Initiative, "Out of Prison & Out of Work: Unemployment among formerly incarcerated people." See <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/outofwork.html>

⁴ Prison Policy Initiative, "Hawaii profile." See <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/profiles/HI.html>

⁵ Prison Policy Initiative, "States of Incarceration: The Global Context." See <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/global/2018.html>

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ Prison Policy Initiative, "Hawaii profile." See <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/profiles/HI.html>

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CURT T. OTAGURO
Comptroller

AUDREY HIDANO
Deputy Comptroller

STATE OF HAWAII

Testimony of the Enhanced 911 Board Meeting

**Before the
Committee on Finance, March 2, 2021
12:00 p.m.
Via Videoconference**

**On the following measure:
H.B. 73 HD1, RELATING TO EMERGENCY WORKERS**

Aloha Chair Sylvia Luke and Members of the Committee:

My name is Courtney Tagupa, and I am the Executive Director of the Enhanced 911 Board.

The Enhanced 911 Board **strongly supports** H.B. 73 HD1, recognizing public safety call takers and dispatchers' brave work by reclassifying them as emergency workers. Currently, the Federal government describes call takers and dispatchers as "administrative" occupations. This classification does not accurately describe dispatchers who undergo extensive training and whose work can mean the difference between life and death. Public safety dispatchers or public safety telecommunicators play a vital role in emergency response. They routinely communicate with individuals in great distress, harm, fear, or injury, including during active shooter situations. Dispatchers are trained to coach callers through first aid, collect vital information for officers, and negotiate in various hostile situations.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of H.B. 73 HD1.

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 73, HD1
RELATING TO EMERGENC WORKERS
FINANCE COMMITTEE
BY
DAVLYNN RACADIO
MAUI POLICE DEPARTMENT
SUPERVISING EMERGENCY SERVICES DISPATCHER
MARCH 2, 2021

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

My name is Davlynn Racadio and I am a Supervising Emergency Services Dispatcher for the County of Maui. I am grateful to be allowed to submit testimony in **SUPPORT** of HB 73, HD1.

I have been working in the Communications Section for Maui County close to 34 years. I have seen the growth of Communications, the technology evolved and the many people that serve their communities without hesitation. Not because it is their job, but because they love their job. They save people's lives and property every day. They answer the 9-1-1 system in multiple fashions, such as a regular phone call, cell phone, an iPad, a text message, or a radio transmission. They might have even answered one of your relatives call for help. Their voices are the first contact with victims or others requesting or demanding that help be sent immediately. They take verbal abuse from many callers but they understand because they are trained to understand, that the callers are living in that moment. That moment when everything matters and they need help immediately. That is what these people are trained to do. Calm the caller, get their location first, generate responding units then the supplemental information, and still stay on the call with them until help arrives. The calltaker could be taking the primary information then passing it on to a police, fire or medical dispatcher (depending on what County in Hawaii you work for) or the calltaker could be the same person dispatching the responding units. But these people that answer the phones are the hearts of the Department that they work for. Each entry into their computers generate responders who would be considered lifelines to the callers.

Due to technology, they have taken on the roles of being investigators, media researchers, counseling and having knowledge of how to read a map and give directions to someone driving so that they can get there within the shortest amount of time. Again, to save lives and property.

These people report to work 24/7/365 so that the communities that **YOU** represent has someone there to answer the phones and send the needed assistance. During this COVID pandemic, they continued to report to work. Schedules adjusted for changes, which they readily adapted to so that the calls from the communities would still be answered and Police, Fire or Medics be dispatched to assist. When the CDC needed recommended changes to protocols to protect the units on the road, our Communications Center added the multiple questions to inquire from the callers to protect those who were going to scene to protect them. They continually adjust to different needs no matter if it was Ebola or COVID 19.

Their roles are vital to Police, Fire, and Medics. They are not clerks. They are certified to give pre-arrival medical instructions which has saved many of your constituents. By determining what is going on, they can start CPR or help a mother give birth. We have all read of reports such as these, but did anyone realize that it was the person answering the 9-1-1 call and/or sending help at the same time, walking these people through their time of need.

This would be the first step for having these people recognized for the job that they do every day. They should be recognized for their skills, acknowledged and compensated as “emergency workers.”

Respectfully, I would ask each of you on this committee to think back on when you or your loved ones have called 9-1-1. So many people take it for granted that there is always someone there to answer the call but when the Police, Fire or Medics get on scene, that voice has been forgotten and replaced by the physical person that arrived. But that voice on 9-1-1 that took your call, was the first person on scene with you. That person should be thought of as an “Emergency Worker.”

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to submit my testimony in full support of HB 73, HD1.

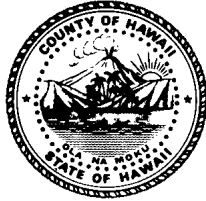
Davlynn Racadio

Maui Police Department/Communications

Davlynn.Racadio@mpd.net

808-244-6338

Mitchell D. Roth
Mayor



Paul K. Ferreira
Police Chief

Kenneth Bugado, Jr.
Deputy Police Chief

County of Hawai`i

POLICE DEPARTMENT

349 Kapi`olani Street • Hilo, Hawai`i 96720-3998
(808) 935-3311 • Fax (808) 961-8865

March 1, 2021

Representative Sylvia Luke
Chairperson and Committee Members
Committee on Finance
415 South Beretania Street, Room 325
Honolulu, Hawai`i 96813

RE : HOUSE BILL 73, HD 1, RELATING TO EMERGENCY WORKERS
HEARING DATE : MARCH 2, 2021
TIME : 12:00 P.M.

Dear Representative Luke:

The Hawai`i Police Department **strongly supports** House Bill 73, HD 1, with its purpose to amend the definition of "emergency worker" in the Penal Code to include communications dispatchers.

I am very familiar with our department's Dispatch Communications Center and have direct knowledge of the expectations placed on Dispatchers. Dispatchers are considered the truest first responders because they answer every emergency call before Police, Fire or Medical personnel are dispatched. They are solely responsible for calming hysterical callers, who are going through what might be the worst moments of their lives. While maintaining their composure and multi-tasking, Dispatchers must quickly and accurately obtain critical information and dispatch Police, Fire and/or Medical services to the caller. The Dispatcher's actions and ability to obtain accurate information are pivotal to the First Responders, which can greatly impact the outcome of the response.

Their roles are intertwined with that of the First Responders because of the additional support services provided to the Responders throughout the duration of each call. As a result, their roles and responsibilities are clearly graver than that of non-emergency dispatchers both in the enormity and complexity of work that they are called upon to perform.

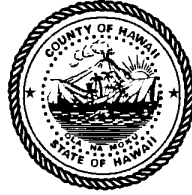
It is for these reasons, we urge this committee to approve this legislation. Thank you for allowing the Hawai`i Police Department to provide comments relating to House Bill 73, HD 1.

Sincerely,

PAUL K. FERREIRA
POLICE CHIEF

Mitchell D. Roth
Mayor

Lee E. Lord
Managing Director



Robert R.K. Perreira
Acting 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

March 1, 2021

Representative Sylvia Luke, Chairperson
Committee on Finance
415 South Beretania Street, Room 325
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: HOUSE BILL 73 Relating to Emergency Workers
HEARING DATE: March 2, 2021
TIME: 12:00 noon

Dear Representative Nakashima:

The Hawai'i Fire Department strongly supports House Bill 73, 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 truly the first responder for each and every 911 call. Dispatchers are tasked with calming any situation, obtaining vital information, staying composed, multi-tasking, delivering lifesaving directions and dispatching emergency units. This all happens prior to any response by Police, Fire or Medical personnel. This is truly "emergency work".

In Hawai'i County, the Hawai'i Fire Department dispatcher is also 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. These types of critical tasks are the type of emergency work our communication dispatchers do twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

The Hawai'i Fire Department respectfully requests this committee to approve this legislation and we thank you for allowing us to provide testimony related to House Bill 73.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "RTPR".

Robert R.K. Perreira
Acting Fire Chief





DEREK S.K. KAWAKAMI, MAYOR
MICHAEL A. DAHLIG, MANAGING DIRECTOR

POLICE DEPARTMENT COUNTY OF KAUAI



TODD G. RAYBUCK, CHIEF OF POLICE

Testimony of Todd G. Raybuck
Chief of Police
Kaua'i Police Department

Before the
Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs
March 2, 2021

In consideration of
HB 73HD1
Relating to Emergency Worker

Honorable Chair Nakashima, Honorable Vice Chair Matayoshi and Members of the Committee:

The Kaua'i Police Department (KPD) **strongly supports** House Bill 73HD1 to amend the definition of "emergency worker" to include Emergency Services Dispatchers.

First responders are essential to maintaining the safety and public health within our communities. Our first responders are the first line of defense against any threats or medical needs to our community. Across the country, thousands of first responders put their lives on the line to protect and serve our communities. However, what is often overlooked is that it is our Emergency Services Dispatchers that took that emergency call are the true first, first responders.

Our Emergency Services Dispatchers are the very first contact with our community. They must keep hysterical callers calm, provide pre-arrival medical instruction, CPR instructions, keep a mother or child safe from harm from an abuser, or perhaps even help a father deliver his first child all of this prior to our filed first responders arrival. They require extensive training to be skilled as an Emergency Services Dispatcher.

Currently our Emergency Services Dispatchers are considered "Clerical Workers." They are not by any means clerical staff, they work 365 days a year, 24 hours a day alongside uniformed first responders.

Emergency Services Dispatchers must have the ability keep calm in the midst of chaos, must have the ability to multi-task, the investigative skills necessary to gather critical information to

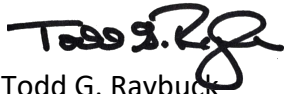


provide to our field responders. And they are the critical voice of calm to our police officers and our community in times of crisis.

For these reasons the Kaua'i Police Department **strongly supports** House Bill 73HD1.

I appreciate your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

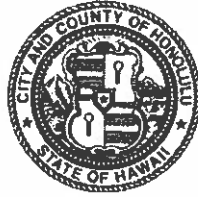
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Todd G. Raybuck". The signature is stylized with a large, looping "R" and "B".

Todd G. Raybuck
Chief of Police
Kaua'i Police Department



POLICE DEPARTMENT
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

801 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET · HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
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RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR

SUSAN BALLARD
CHIEF

JOHN D. MCCARTHY
AARON TAKASAKI-YOUNG
DEPUTY CHIEFS

OUR REFERENCE **AF-AS**

March 2, 2021

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. 73, H.D. 1, Relating to Emergency Workers

I am Aaron Farias, Captain of the Communications Division of the Honolulu Police Department (HPD), City and County of Honolulu.

The HPD supports House Bill No. 73, H.D. 1, Relating to Emergency Workers.

This bill would classify telecommunications dispatchers for police, fire, and emergency medical services as emergency workers under Hawaii Revised Statutes 707-700 (definitions for the chapter relating to offenses against persons). This will effectively align our 911 emergency response operators and police communications officers with law enforcement officers, firefighters, and armed services members during declared emergencies.

Like the Federal 9-1-1 SAVES Act (Supporting Accurate Views of Emergency Services Act of 2019) introduced as H.R. 1629 of the 116th Congress (2019-2020), this bill seeks to advance public safety telecommunications personnel above administrative or clerical classifications but as specialized in performing lifesaving work along with and in support of first responders.

The HPD urges you to support House Bill No. 73, H.D. 1.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

APPROVED:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan Ballard", written over a horizontal line.

Susan Ballard
Chief of Police

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. Farias", written over a horizontal line.

Aaron Farias, Captain
Communications Division



MICHAEL P. VICTORINO
MAYOR

OUR REFERENCE

YOUR REFERENCE

POLICE DEPARTMENT

COUNTY OF MAUI

55 MAHALANI STREET
WAILUKU, HAWAII 96793
(808) 244-6400
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TIVOLI S. FAAUMU
CHIEF OF POLICE

DEAN M. RICKARD
DEPUTY CHIEF OF POLICE

March 1, 2021

The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
The Honorable Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance
31st State Legislature 2021
Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: HOUSE BILL 73 RELATING TO EMERGENCY WORKERS

Dear Chair Luke and Committee Members:

The Maui Police Department SUPPORTS the passage of HB 73, which amends the definition of "emergency worker" to include telecommunications dispatchers.

The inclusion of dispatchers with law enforcement, public safety, fire and medical, and military is more in line with our emergency response system. We consider dispatchers our "first responders for first responders" as they initiate any type of emergency response and are our lifeline during the incident.

They are responsible for taking 911 and emergency calls from beginning to end. It is their response and demeanor which sets the tone for the initial call, then they must maintain calm and control while determining the type of call and appropriate response that is needed, all the while gathering critical information for the duration of the call while monitoring and coordinating the responding emergency elements. Then they must close out and input the incident once completed and prepare to answer the next call. This type of multi-tasking is complex and requires tremendous skill. In addition to providing support to emergency responders, they are trained to perform lifesaving work such as giving instruction on first aid and CPR over the phone. For these reasons amongst others, they should be in a class above administrative and/or clerical positions.

The Maui Police Department strongly urges the passage of HB 73. Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,


TIVOLI S. FAAUMU
Chief of Police



HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

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

The Thirty-First Legislature, State of Hawaii
House of Representatives
Committee on Finance

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association

March 2, 2021

H.B. 73, H.D. 1 – RELATING TO EMERGENCY WORKERS

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO supports the intent of H.B. 73, H.D. 1 which amends the definition of “emergency worker” to include communications dispatchers and on-scene coordinators. We appreciate the amendments from the Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs to increase the inclusiveness and recognition of additional employees.

H.B. 73 appropriately adds telecommunications dispatchers, including police, fire, and emergency medical dispatchers, on-scene coordinators, and Hawaii State Hospital telephone operators 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. 73, H.D. 1.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
Executive Director

HB-73-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2021 8:23:16 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2021 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Felix Cramer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Hawaii State Hospital Kaneohe is in fact a psychiatric prison because none of the patients are voluntary admissions, all are court committed. HSH is also a FEMA emergency shelter/services location. Telecommunications workers at HSH coordinate and monitor the movement of all persons at the facility 24/7/365 days a year to insure safety and efficient operations. When sheriff, OCCC, HPD arrive with patients it's telecommunications that greets and directs them. When court related personal arrive telecommunications is again there. When disaster strikes and emergency services are activated its telecommunications that manages communications. For accepting this important responsibility telecommunications workers are paid \$5/hr less than janitors or psy tecks who have far less training, responsibility, or communications skills. This has been the case for over 10 years and the primary reason telecommunications positions are difficult to fill. Fixing this is long overdue. Please support HB73 HD1.

HB-73-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2021 11:09:32 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2021 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jonathan Darr	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

2021 marks 35 years that I have served in the Honolulu Fire Department, the last 9 as a Hazmat officer.

The Hawaii state on-scene coordinator and the Hawaii state hospital telephone operators provide a critical service to our state, counties and our community for health, safety and for our environment. I can imagine how difficult my job would be without them and how perilous it would be for our community without their services during critical emergencies.

I am very much in support of HB73 HD1 that would classify Hawaii state on-scene coordinators, telecommunications dispatchers including for police, fire, and emergency medical services as well as Hawaii state hospital telephone operators as emergency workers under Hawaii Revised Statutes 707-700 (definitions for the chapter relating to offenses against persons).

This bill will align our Hawaii state on-scene coordinators and their dispatchers at the Hawaii state hospital as well as 911 emergency response operators, dispatchers, call takers and communications officers the same as with law enforcement officers, firefighters, and armed services members during declared emergencies.

February 28, 2021

Representative Sylvia Luke
Chair, House Committee on Finance
Hawaii State Capitol, room 306
415 South Beretania St.
Honolulu, HI 96813

Chair Luke,

I am a retired Battalion Chief in the Hawaii Fire Department on the island of Hawaii and I am submitting testimony in support of HB73 HD1 relating to the definition of Emergency Workers. As part of my duties for the last 9 years in my position, I was the program administrator of the Hazardous Materials emergency response for our county. I am also the Chair of the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) on the island of Hawaii and a member of the Hawaii State Emergency Response Commission (HSERC).

I strongly support this measure to include Hawaii State On-Scene Coordinators and Telecommunications Dispatchers. On any given emergency incident, we as emergency responders rely on the information that our dispatchers and on-scene coordinators can provide to us for our safety. I have worked closely with them on many incidents and definitely see their value for us as responders and the community. They work tirelessly and are available for our needs 24/7. We rely on them to provide vital and timely information to us during emergency incidents.

Again, this is a very important bill for the safety of our first responders and to protect the community and environment. Thank you for allowing me to provide this testimony.

Sincerely,

Gerald Kosaki, Battalion Chief retired
Hawaii Fire Department

HB-73-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2021 2:52:41 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2021 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Albert Makanani Jr	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha to the Hawaii State Legislature,

My name is Albert Makanani Jr and I currently work as a Telephone Operator at the Hawaii State Hospital. I'm writing you today in support of HB73 HD1 Relating to Emergency Workers.

I've been a here at the Hawaii State Hospital as the Telecom Operator for the last 5 years and feel that the current description does not accurately descibe what we do here. We are on call 24/7 not only for HSH but also for Hazardous Evaluation and Emergency Response Office as well. We deal with multiple tasks from emergency operations, security detail and also answering calls from the community and connecting them to the right departments.

I'm asking for your support to pass HB73 as it more accurately describes what my position does and feel that this change is most needed. Our job has changed drastically over the years and that change needs to be reflected in what we do.

I sincerely seek your support in the passing of this bill. Mahalo for your time! Aloha!

HB-73-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2021 4:14:34 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2021 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Curt S. Morimoto	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I've worked in the EMS profession for (45 years) and have witnessed firsthand the importance of EMERGENCY DISPATCHERS in numerous 911 jurisdictions. Emergency 911 telecommunication dispatchers attend the highest NATIONAL level emergency MEDICAL dispatch courses for REQUIRED certification. Their duties & responsibilities should be recognized in the same manner as the other "emergency" classification workers listed in this bill. Thank you for your consideration to APPROVE!!

HB-73-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2021 5:53:45 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2021 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kathleen Soule	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I urge you to pass HB 73 to include dispatchers as emergency workers. As an EMT, I'm considered a front line worker. Our dispatchers are the FRONT OF THE FRONT LINE WORKERS! They are the ones that make sure emergency services are expedited and have the most stressful job of all of us. Mahalo!

31st Legislature
State of Hawaii
Hawaii State Capitol
415 S Beretania St
Honolulu, HI 96813



David Mendonsa
Paradise Medical Services, LLC
640 Komo Ohia
Wailuku, HI 96793

March 1, 2021

Dear Chair and Representatives,

I appreciate the opportunity to express the importance for Dispatch and Communication Centers regarding the dispatching of 911 calls. Dispatch personnel operate the control center of the EMS systems. Their task is no simple feat as they operate in unique call centers and geographic areas of operations (Honolulu City & County EMSD, Maui Police Dispatch, Hawaii County Fire Department Dispatch, and Kauai County).

Please allow commend these individuals, for their guidance and professionalism. I have depended and relied on dispatch centers for Kauai, Maui, Honolulu, and Big Island. You can get the sense of the EMS system by sitting in the dispatch center. In addition, they provide prearrival instructions to worried bystanders, organize response, and track our movements. Dispatchers provide a safety measures when we do not check in. They have provided me with accurate addresses and cross streets, language interpretation, inter-agency communications, communication updates during hazardous conditions, and sent law enforcement to pull security and provide safety on precarious calls.

Thank you again for allowing me to share my experiences. I humbly ask that you support our Dispatch and Communication Centers. Please consider Dispatchers as critical EMS/Public Safety personnel. Please **Support** HB73,HD1 "Emergency Workers" and **Strongly Oppose** HB1298 -Relating to State Funds and HB 1299 – Relating to Non-General Funds.

Respectfully,

David Mendonsa, PA-C, MCHS, MPA
EMS Provider, Healthcare Provider
Prior- Service Member, UH EMS Faculty, Aeromedical Provider

HB-73-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2021 8:49:58 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2021 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Loren Kahakua	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a public servant of the County of Hawaii, Big Island, for 5 years, as a telecommunications Fire Dispatcher with the Hawaii [County] Fire Department, I support the Proposed HB#73 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 my testimony. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Loren Kahakua

P.O Box 306

Mountain View, HI 96771

HB-73-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2021 9:05:12 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2021 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Tito Villanueva	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Support

HB-73-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2021 9:09:22 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2021 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Travis Ing	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am resubmitting my testimony for HB73 HD1 so it may be heard again. Please consider adding these people as emergency workers. They deserve to be recognized as such.

First Responders are essential to maintaining public health and safety. They are the first line against the chaos and mayhem that threaten the community. Every single day, thousands put their life on the line to protect you so you can live your life. What no one ever remembers is that 911 Dispatchers are the ones that allow this to happen.

They are the **actual** first line of contact between help and the ones in need of it. Without them, Police, Fire or Medical services *cannot* do their jobs. deal with people in times of their greatest need and comfort or even save lives themselves over a phone. Communications dispatchers are the literal unseen heroes of first responders.

They are **not** clerical workers. A clerical worker does not try to keep their victim safe from an enraged family member with a knife until the police arrive with only a phone connection. Clerical workers do not give CPR instructions over the phone to save a dying person. Clerical workers do not calm the public and help them when called about an incoming missile attack, tsunami watch or lava flow nearing their home. Clerical workers do not have to work 24 hour shifts and be forced to do overtime if someone calls in sick. No one bats an eye if a clerical worker is sick. When a coms dispatcher is sick, someone **MUST** fill their shift. I supervised a Communications Center for 9 years. These are the most selfless and committed people I have ever met.

These people do not ask for much, but they do deserve our respect. They should at the very least be classified as emergency workers.

Mahalo for your consideration.

HB-73-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2021 9:11:08 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2021 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Clarice Olson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am respectfully requesting your support to pass HB73 and its companion bill SB184 to recognize Hawaii State On-Scene Coordinators as “emergency workers”. They work alongside other emergency response personnel and are on call 24/7 365 days a year. They respond to emergency releases of hazardous substances including oil and hazardous chemicals.

HB-73-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2021 9:13:07 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2021 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dree-Ann Duarte	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly request you pass HB73, in support of the Hawaii State Hospital telecommunication operators being included as emergency workers. It is a 24/7 office that responds to all emergencies at the hospital. The hospital operators also respond to emergencies, inquiries, and complaints from the public for other State Department of Health when their offices are closed after 4:30pm, on weekends, and holidays. They are the friendly voice you hear when you call the hospital's main line. It takes a level-headed, patient, and quick-thinking individual to do this type of work. They deserve our respect.

Mahalo!

D.A. Duarte

HB-73-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2021 11:04:57 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2021 12:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Dear Chairman Nakashima:

The following testimony is being submitted in support of House Bill 73 as an individual.

Telecommunications Dispatchers are the "first" first responders, to each and every call received at the Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP). They are tasked with ensuring that the appropriate types of emergency services are sent to these calls for assistance, no matter the time of day or night. Many of the calls that our Dispatchers receive are very stressful, and require quick sound thinking to determine what time of response is needed. They continuously need to multitask throughout their shift between taking calls, dispatching personnel as well as communicating with other departments and/or agencies as part of their duties.

Many people don't understand or see what our dispatchers consistently do on a daily basis. I have had the privilege to work with and observe our dispatchers perform their duties. It truly takes a special person to be a Dispatcher. They certainly deserve the classification of Emergency Workers.

Respectfully,

Robert Fujitake Jr.

HB-73-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2021 11:28:15 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2021 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rober Harter	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I fully support that Hawaii Department of Health - Hazard Evaluation and Emergency Response (HEER) office personnel responding to a hazardous material release or spill as Hawaii State On-Scene Coordinators should be included in this bill. They are responding along with other First Responders for the safety of both people and the environment.

Including the Hawaii State On-Scene Coordinators in this bill is the right thing to do!

HB-73-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2021 11:40:50 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2021 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Charlene Iokia	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support this measure. As an employee of the Hawaii State Hospital I have seen first-hand the scope of telephone calls and alarms that are simultaneously received and acted on. The Hawaii State Hospital telephone operators are the initial receivers of emergency alarms and telephone calls for the hospital (and the Department of Health after-hours) and must act quickly to notify appropriate parties, relying on their experience and training to make referrals in a calm manner. I feel they have earned and deserve an "emergency worker" designation. Thank you for your consideration.

HB-73-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2021 2:25:28 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2021 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Richie Mitsumoto	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I support HB73 HD1. I have worked with the Hawaii State HEER Office On-Scene Coordinators off and on for approximately the last 10 years as a member of the Honolulu Fire Department Hazmat Team. They have proven to be an invaluable resource for us for hazmat mitigation, clean-up, disposal and cost recovery efforts just to name a few. They have assisted us both remotely and by responding directly to emergency incident scenes at all hours of the day. Your support of this bill would allow the Hawaii State HEER Office to continue their commitment to keeping all of Hawaii safe.

Mahalo,

Richie Mitsumoto, Fire Captain HFD, HM2/3rd Platoon

HB-73-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2021 6:26:53 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2021 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alexander Adams	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I would like to support the State of Hawaii Department of Health On-scene Coordinators (OSC) from the Hazard Evaluation Emergency Response Office (HEER Office) to be recognized as emergency workers. I am a Fire Captain with the Honolulu Fire Department assigned to one of two Hazmat units and I have asked for their assistance many times regarding emergency incidents involving hazmat incidents. On large incidents, they have responded to the emergency site personally to provide guidance, especially if the hazmat incident involves multiple agencies, multiple jurisdictions, and environmental laws. They provide 24/7 support to the Fire Departments. Hazmat Captains can call or email them any time of the day. They also provide the same support to the Kauai, Maui, and Hawaii Fire Department. The HEER Office also host the quarterly Hawaii State Emergency Response Commission (HSERC) meetings that various City and State agencies attend, including the chairmans of the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) from each county, which I am chair of in Honolulu.

In closing, the State On-scene Coordinators should be recognized as emergency workers. The OSCs work out of their office called the Hazard Evaluation EMERGENCY Response Office. It already says it in their name.

Mahalo,

Alexander Adams

Captain, Hazmat 1/2nd

Honolulu Fire Department

Chair Honolulu LEPC

HB-73-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/2/2021 5:20:24 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2021 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Craig Tanaka	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Emergency telecommunications dispatchers are the first line of our emergency workers. Without them, critical information and direction cannot take place.

I am in full support of this bill as they are emergency workers.

HB-73-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/2/2021 7:50:30 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2021 12:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nolan Nip	Honolulu Fire Department	Support	No

Comments:

As a responding Company Officer to emerging Hazmat emergencies in our State of Hawaii, the Dept of Health On Scene Coordinator plays a vital role in emergency response, mitigation and termination of the incident. I can personally attest as a HFD Hazmat Captain to numerous occasions where the DOH's HEER OSC was crucial in persuading the responsible party in assisting in the mitigation of the incident.

Aloha Rep.Nakamura,

Thank you for introducing HB 73 HD1- reclassification of Emergency Services Dispatchers from being labled "Clerical" workers.

I am in strong support of this bill as I am an Emergency Services Dispatcher for the Kauai Police Department. I have been apart of Kauai's Public Safety Answering Point for the past 8+ years.

Kauai's PSAP is a unique system that handles a spectrum of calls. We field calls for service for Police, Fire, Medics, Ocean Safety, DLNR/Conservation, Kauai Humane Society, KIUC, Dept.of Water, County Park Rangers, Hawaiian Telcom, State Highways, and County/Public Works.

The calls we handle ranges anywhere from crisis from suicidal callers, bank robberies in progress, assaults in progress, traffic accidents with fatalities, drownings, people at their lowest moments, and people highly under the influence. The examples above only scratches the surface of the calls that we receive.

Some calls can be heartwrenching; some can be ordinary. We also work through alot of stressful times with long hours. But nonetheless we press forward knowing our duties and how committed we are to our jobs.

In order to field these type of calls we receive residual training in Police Dispatching, Medical Dispatching, and Fire Dispatching that certifies us in those fields.

Although our job duties consist of using Computer Aided Dispatch- "CAD" by no means should our jobs continue to be classified as "Clerical Workers". Our job does not entail us sitting at a desk and just doing secretarial duties.

We handle live calls from start to finish- people calling for help and it is our job to render them assistance. A clerical or secretarial employee does not do what an ESD does. All the while we are having to multi task from taking the calls, sending help, and ensuring assistance was rendered.

It is my hope that this legislation is passed. I express my humble gratitude for your role in sponsoring this bill. I give you permission to include my testimony in support of it.

Thank you for your time and understanding.

Respectfully,

Ginger PD Bray
KPD/ESD II
Thin Gold Line

Dear Representative,

I strongly support House Bill B73 HD1! Our Telephone Operators are an important part of the Hawaii State Hospital. They are the Hub of Communication from answering phones to letting other hospital staff know we have an emergency on a unit. A patient maybe attacking a staff members. On one occasion a patient was bashing a staff person's head on a cement pillar when it was later discovered the patient had cracked the employee skull. Quick action by the operator, being calm, and requesting help probably saved that staff person's life. Occasionally we have a staff person or a patient who requires immediate medical attention. The operators coordinated getting doctors to the unit and contacting emergency service and guiding them through the hospital to the unit they are needed. People lives depend on our operators who have vast skill from handle medical, safety and our facilities such as bomb threats.

Their current pay range is in the neighborhood of a Mc Donald's order taker but the responsibility is vastly different. The pay is so low that it is difficult to hire individuals to work at the meager salaries we offer. Please support HB73 HD1