



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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LATE

**Testimony in SUPPORT of S.B. 1153 S.D. 1
MAKING AN EMERGENCY APPROPRIATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH FOR THE EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AND INJURY
PREVENTION SYSTEM BRANCH**

SENATOR DONOVAN M. DELA CRUZ, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Hearing Date: 2/26/2021 9:30am Room Number: 211/VideoConference

1 **Fiscal Implications:** This bill appropriates an unspecified amount for fiscal year 2020-2021
2 out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii to the Department of Health (DOH) for
3 collective bargaining increases and other current expenses necessary to maintain the current
4 statewide 911 comprehensive emergency medical services (EMS) system.

5 The DOH requests the following appropriation:

6 1. Section 3: \$4,786,333 for collective bargaining and other current expenses.

7 **Department Testimony:** The DOH strongly supports S.B.1153, S.D. 1, with the requested
8 appropriation amount to be included. An emergency appropriation is necessary to maintain
9 comprehensive EMS services for the residents and visitors in the counties of Hawaii, Kauai,
10 Maui, and Oahu for FY 2021.

11 For the current fiscal year, there is an operational budget shortfall of \$4,786,333. The shortfall
12 results from pandemic related budget restrictions to the EMS base budget, collective bargaining
13 increases, and lack of funding for other current expenses related to personnel costs and the three
14 new emergency medical vehicles approved in 2018 for counties of the City and County of
15 Honolulu, Kauai, and Hawaii.

16 Recognizing the state's financial shortfall as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the DOH
17 explored options to minimize the amount of this emergency request. Through redirecting funds

- 1 within the EMS budget, the Department has been able to partially offset the budget shortfall.
- 2 Although the Department continues to explore several options to improve the resiliency of the
- 3 statewide system, reforms will not be implemented soon enough to meet the anticipated costs for
- 4 the current fiscal year.

- 5 If the funds are not provided to meet required FY 21 collective bargaining increases and other
- 6 current expenses, a reduction in critical lifesaving services and essential personnel will be
- 7 necessary to remain within funding limits.

- 8 Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this measure.