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# HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO ADDRESS ISSUES RELATING TO PATIENT TRANSFER AND AMBULANCE SERVICES AND EVALUATE POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS.

1           WHEREAS, patients on Oahu and the neighbor islands are  
2 currently experiencing significant delays while waiting for  
3 transfer to a facility that can provide a higher level of care;  
4 and

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6           WHEREAS, according to the Hawaii Chapter of the American  
7 College of Emergency Physicians (HACEP), these delays have led  
8 to serious, sometimes even fatal repercussions for affected  
9 patients; and

10  
11           WHEREAS, HACEP has conducted a preliminary review of these  
12 cases which affirms the critical need to address this issue and  
13 has identified three primary issues with the current patient  
14 transfer and ambulance system; and

15  
16           WHEREAS, first, unless there is a preexisting agreement  
17 between two hospitals, if a physician caring for a patient needs  
18 specific services not available at the physician's health care  
19 facility, the physician must research what is available at other  
20 facilities and contact them one by one to determine whether the  
21 other facility has the services and bed space to care for the  
22 patient, which can lead to significant delays of up to five days  
23 in some reported cases; and

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25           WHEREAS, second, patient transportation capacity can be a  
26 major obstacle; even if a bed or service is available in another  
27 facility, a suitable transportation service must also be  
28 available, one which can accommodate the specific medical needs  
29 of the patient; and  
30



1 WHEREAS, currently, only one company, Hawaii Life Flight,  
 2 offers air ambulance services for neighbor islands, and on Oahu,  
 3 American Medical Response is the sole private ground ambulance  
 4 and primary provider of inter-facility transport, with Honolulu  
 5 Emergency Medical Services primarily focused on emergency 911  
 6 responses; and

7  
 8 WHEREAS, third, limited bed availability and the ability to  
 9 provide appropriate care by a receiving hospital must also be  
 10 addressed; even if a bed is available at a certain facility to  
 11 receive a patient, the facility must also have the necessary  
 12 personnel and infrastructure to care for that patient which  
 13 could include specialized services such as hemodialysis, cardiac  
 14 catheterization, and provision of an intensive care unit level  
 15 of care, among others; and

16  
 17 WHEREAS, to develop and evaluate potential solutions to  
 18 these complex issues will likely require the input, expertise,  
 19 and collaborative efforts of the many stakeholders involved in  
 20 providing care to patients throughout the State; now, therefore,

21  
 22 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the  
 23 Thirty-second Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular  
 24 Session of 2024, the Senate concurring, that the Director of  
 25 Health is requested to convene a working group to address issues  
 26 relating to the existing system of patient transfer and  
 27 ambulance services and evaluate potential solutions including:

- 28  
 29 (1) Formation of a statewide coordinated transfer system  
 30 to identify available beds, specialized medical  
 31 services, medical specialist availability, and level  
 32 of care;  
 33  
 34 (2) Increasing transportation capacity for both ground and  
 35 air transport of patients, including interisland air  
 36 transport of patients; and  
 37  
 38 (3) Increasing bed and specialized medical service  
 39 availability at accepting hospitals, with a focus on  
 40 high-need areas such as hemodialysis capacity; and  
 41

42 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Director of Health invite  
 43 representatives of the following stakeholders to serve on the  
 44 working group:



- 1
- 2 (1) The emergency services or fire department of each
- 3 county in the State;
- 4
- 5 (2) The State Emergency Medical Services Advisory
- 6 Committee;
- 7
- 8 (3) Healthcare Association of Hawaii;
- 9
- 10 (4) Hawaii Chapter of the American College of Emergency
- 11 Physicians;
- 12
- 13 (5) Hospitals and federally qualified health centers
- 14 serving both rural and urban populations, including
- 15 representatives from each county in the State; and
- 16
- 17 (6) Transportation service providers including current and
- 18 future air and ground transportation service
- 19 providers;
- 20

21 provided that the Director of Health may invite other  
 22 stakeholders as necessary; and

23  
 24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested  
 25 to submit a final report to the Legislature, including  
 26 recommendations and proposed legislation, no later than twenty  
 27 days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2025; and

28  
 29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
 30 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Health  
 31 who is in turn requested to transmit a copy to each stakeholder  
 32 invited to the working group.

