



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

**Testimony in SUPPORT of SB1153
MAKING AN EMERGENCY APPROPRIATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH FOR THE EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AND INJURY
PREVENTION SYSTEM BRANCH**

SENATOR JARRETT KEOHOKALO, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Hearing Date: 1:00p 2/8/2021

Room Number: via Video

1 **Fiscal Implications:** This bill appropriates \$6,400,000 for fiscal year 2020-2021 out of the
2 general revenues of the State of Hawaii to the Department of Health (DOH) for collective
3 bargaining increases and other current expenses necessary to maintain the current statewide
4 911 comprehensive emergency medical services (EMS) system.

5 **Department Testimony:** The DOH strongly supports S.B.1153. An emergency appropriation
6 is necessary to maintain comprehensive EMS services for the residents and visitors in the
7 counties of Hawaii, Kauai, Maui and Oahu for FY 2021. The Department is respectfully
8 requesting to amend this measure by reducing the amount needed from \$6,400,000 to
9 \$4,800,000.

10 For the current fiscal year, there was an operational budget shortfall of \$6,400,000. The shortfall
11 resulted from pandemic related budget restrictions to the EMS base budget, collective bargaining
12 increases, and lack of funding for other current expenses related to personnel costs and the three
13 new emergency medical vehicles approved in 2018 for counties of the City and County of
14 Honolulu, Kauai, and Hawaii.

15 Recognizing the state's financial shortfall as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the DOH has
16 been exploring all available options to minimize the amount of this emergency request. Through
17 redirecting funds within the EMS budget, the Department has been able to partially offset the
18 budget shortfall. Although the Department continues to explore several options to improve the
19 resiliency of the statewide system, reforms will not be implemented soon enough to meet the
20 anticipated costs for the current fiscal year.

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

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

LATE

SB-1153

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 9:05:57 AM

Testimony for HTH on 2/8/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Speedy Bailey	Testifying for AMR	Support	No

Comments:

Strong support in favor. This appropriation is necessary for essential Emergency Medical Services.

LATE

SB-1153

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 9:43:57 AM

Testimony for HTH on 2/8/2021 1:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Thank you for hearing this bill. It is crucial for unexpected EMS funding so as not to remove EMS units statewide. The EMS budget shortfall MUST be funded. EMS is needed more today during the pandemic than ever. Please approve. Thank you.

LATE

SB-1153

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 9:50:17 AM

Testimony for HTH on 2/8/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
David Kingdon	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Assuring continued funding of the State's EMS and injury prevention system is as 'essential' as it gets. While we understand this is a time of budget austerity, our EMS system (particularly on the neighbor islands) is already frugal in comparison to the volume and geographic distribution of emergencies and other calls for service. Now in the midst of an ongoing public health emergency, we must remain vigilant and prepared for fluctuations in the pandemic, variable levels of tourist and transient populations, physical and psychological health fallout from COVID and the recession, along with all of the 'regular' demands on an EMS and injury prevention system.

Please assure continued funding of the State EMS and injury prevention system at least at pre-pandemic levels.

Thank you for your consideration.

David Kingdon, MPH, Paramedic

LATE

SB-1153

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 10:13:31 AM

Testimony for HTH on 2/8/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Gerald M Wright	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

It is imperative that the emergency medical services that Hawaii's citizens depend on especially in unprecedented times like the pandemic stay strong, reliable and dependable. It is literally a lifeline to those in need and the state can ill afford to allow that line to fray.

Please support this bill in full measure.

Thank you for your time and hard work,

Respectfully,

Gerald Wright

LATE

31st Legislature/Senate
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

February 8, 2021

Dear Chair and Representatives,

I appreciate the opportunity to express my support for SB1153. I understand the delicate nature of the comprehensive provision of Emergency Medical Service, as I have worked in the 911 System for the State of Hawaii EMSIPB, for Honolulu City & County EMS, International Life Support, American Medical Response (all four counties), Hawaii Air Ambulance, Hawaii Life Flight, the Queens Medical Center, Hilo Medical Center, Honolulu Community College, Kapiolani Community College. The EMS system is built upon a relationship between all key stakeholders. This relationship is complicated and interconnected at all levels from customers, state authority, providers, and healthcare partners and our community members. The State of Hawaii EMS System and SB1153 needs your support.

EMS is a public resource and a safety net. When 911 is activated you will get an EMS response. The call is answered by trained care givers. This is our calling. However, the with the threat of fiscal restraints and actualized budget cuts, this will dramatically affect the ability for EMS to answer the call to 911. EMS needs the vital funding to maintain the response and protection to our community in urban and rural setting. Please look ahead to the trends for medical response and needs; COVID 19, Trauma, Cardiac events, Stroke, and other immediate reversible emergencies that EMS is strongly needed.

Thank you for allowing me to share my experiences and express my support. Please consider support for SB1153. Please feel free to contact me anytime.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "DM", is written over the word "Respectfully,".

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

David Mendonsa
Paradise Medical Services, LLC

LATE

SB-1153

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 10:42:58 AM

Testimony for HTH on 2/8/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Darrin Rowan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

First, I would like to thank you for your excellent handling of the COVID19 crisis on Maui. I think your decisions, though difficult, have kept the community safe and are in our best interest. But I feel the need to bring the following to your attention. At a time when we should be focused on the continued health and safety of our ohana, not supporting SB 1153 is opting for the exact opposite. This is both ill-advised and dangerous. It affects not only your constituents, but your very ohana. I ask you to use your political voice to approve SB 1153, as not only will the visitor industry expect a safe destination when tourism returns, our families and ohana deserve a safe home now during this pandemic and throughout the recovery of our islands from COVID19.

I humbly request that you to stop any cuts to EMS. Now is not the time. Support SB 1153.

LATE

SB-1153

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 11:00:40 AM

Testimony for HTH on 2/8/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
kapena hill	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing in support of this bill which would provide funding and prevent the loss of crucial 911 emergency services. During a health crisis such as this, it makes absolutely no sense to cut ANY health services, much less any emergency services.

We have seen an increase in call volume over the years in Maui with no new units since 2013. Our most populated area of the island is only covered by one ambulance. We should be adding, not taking away services.

Covid has impacted the revenue for the state, but even when there is a decrease in income, certain bills must be paid. Ambulance services is not something you can afford to lose.

Emergency rooms are constantly overwhelmed, clinics refuse to see patients with fevers, and some have already closed or decreased their hours drastically. More and more people are turning to EMS because of this. We are also the first line of defense and activation when pandemics and emergencies happen. Our eyes and ears are open 24/7, and at this time we also play a vital role in preventing the spread by assisting with triage and planning for those who may have mild symptoms. We are able to assess and help with alternative transport or treatment options in conjunction with state EMS, the online physicians, and protocols, when they exist. By closing units, you will decrease a vital resource that should be expanded on and not cut.

Also, by expanding the role of EMS, and adding more non-transport resources statewide, we will have the ability to respond to and triage, treat, and help arrange alternative treatment options. Hawaii needs to follow through with the necessary upgrades to the EMS electronic reports, so we can be compliant and participate in the ET3 program which would allow for billing for non-transports. This will bring in lots of money to help put back in to the general fund, while providing the response, treatment, testing, and community health services that are needed very badly.

Hawaii used to have one of the best EMS systems in the country, and it is time we start doing what we have to do to regain that status and beyond.

Please support this bill, and assure the continued response and care that all residents and visitors to Hawaii expect and deserve.

Thank you,

Kapena HII

MICT/Paramedic, CCP-C, TP-C

Maui, Hawaii

LATE

SB-1153

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 12:40:17 PM

Testimony for HTH on 2/8/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nisakorn Saa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am in SUPPORT of this Bill. We need to keep Emergency Medical Services funded as is. It is dangerous for our families, friends, communities, and visitors to lose any existing Emergency Services. Speaking for Maui, our hospital Emergency Department is overwhelmed and EMS is the only extension the hospitals have to help alleviate and intervene with field medical care. Please help to keep the system at a minimum as is.

LATE

SB-1153

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 12:42:20 PM

Testimony for HTH on 2/8/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
JOSE SAA	Testifying for Maui County Paramedics Association	Support	No

Comments:

We, Maui County Paramedics Association are in SUPPORT of this Bill. We cannot afford to lose any Emergency Services as we are already stretched thin as it is. Any loss would be devastating and overloading to our stressed EMS/FD/PD services. These funds are extremely important to maintain holding our heads just above the water. Please consider the consequences as if your life depends on it.