



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Health
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By
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HB 216 – RELATING TO COMMUNITY PARAMEDIC SERVICES

Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Kobayashi and members of the committee:

The University of Hawai'i supports HB 216, "Relating to Community Paramedic Services." The implementation of a Community Paramedic program in the State of Hawai'i will help to raise the overall health of Hawai'i's residents. In particular, a program designed to train Community Paramedics will benefit individuals who have social determinates of health issues, specifically access to healthcare.

There are a number of benefits that Community Paramedics can provide, such as addressing the needs of those with chronic illness (Congestive Heart Failure, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, and Mental illness), improving access to healthcare (federally qualified health centers (FQHC), primary care physicians, community health centers), and assisting those with transportation issues. In addition, Community Paramedics can make recommendations on home safety issues and social issues (e.g., domestic violence, food scarcity, social service needs). Lastly, Community Paramedics are the new frontline for chronic health disease management. The Community Paramedic can identify health trends (vital signs, weigh gain, etc.) that are warning signs in preventing the need for acute or emergency need for treatment in already over-crowded emergency departments.

Kapi'olani Community College has been a member of the working group that was created in HCR 90 (2016). In the current measure, KCC is also responsible for developing the curriculum and training. We stand ready to assist in developing and implementing this important program. With regard to Section 2(1), "Training and Certification", the University requests funding be provided for curriculum development and training responsibilities as outlined in this measure.