



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health
Senate Committee on Higher Education
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SB 2374 – RELATING TO COMMUNITY PARAMEDIC SERVICES

Chairs Baker and Kahele, Vice Chairs Tokuda and Kim, and members of the committees:

The University of Hawai'i supports Senate Bill 2374. This measure implements the recommendations of the working group, formed in HCR 90/16, by establishing and appropriating funds for a three-year pilot program on community paramedicine.

Kapi'olani Community College (KapCC) is the primary educational institution for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) training in the State of Hawai'i. KapCC provides training for individuals to support their communities with highly qualified, emergency medical providers such as Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics. These individuals are then gainfully employed by EMS agencies to help meet their staffing needs.

Agencies such as City & County of Honolulu – EMS, Hawai'i County Fire Department – EMS, and American Medical Response – EMS routinely respond to many unnecessary 911 calls for individuals that do not require the use of an emergency ambulance (*“Providing Acute Care at Home: Community Paramedics Enhance an Advanced Illness Management Program”* and *“Mobile Integrated Health Care and Community Paramedicine: An Emerging Emergency Medical Services Concept”*). These agencies also respond to many emergency calls for patients who suffer chronic medical conditions, such as diabetes, hypertension, and renal disease, which do not require an emergency ambulance (*“An Innovative Approach to Health Care Delivery for Patients with Chronic Conditions”* and *“A Pilot Mobile Integrated Healthcare Program for Frequent Utilizers of Emergency Department Services”*).

A Community Paramedic program will help the already over-burdened 911-system by allowing individuals who successfully complete a Community Paramedic program, to respond to these non-life threatening calls. Furthermore, these highly trained Community Paramedics would be able to manage chronic high frequency callers or those with chronic medical conditions at home, through a mobile integrated healthcare (MIH) approach. This patient care management will help to reduce unnecessary transportation to busy emergency department, saving valuable resources, emergency ambulances, to respond to true medical emergencies.

The University of Hawai'i supports the intent of SB 2374 on the condition that any funds do not supplant any portion of the University's Supplemental Budget Request.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this bill.