



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM

TESTIMONY

S. B. 3156, S.D. 1

Relating to Emergency Medical Services

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Finance

March 31, 2004

by

John Morton
Chancellor, Kapi'olani Community College
University of Hawai'i

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Chair Takamine and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawaii-Kapiolani Community College supports the passage of S.B. 3156, S.D. 1, Relating to Emergency Medical Services.

Kapi'olani Community College has the responsibility for emergency medical services education statewide. Since the early 1970's, the development of such a statewide system has been a challenge. The costs of equipment, minimum quantity of supplies, lack of qualified instructional staff, a limited job market and the small number of qualified students have made it difficult to maintain quality education programs on the neighbor islands. Recent budget restrictions have further impacted our ability to develop programs for initial training of Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics on Maui and Kauai.

We are now approaching a time where Paramedics on the neighbor islands are aging, and efforts need to be taken to provide replacements with minimal impact on current services. Although the issue of providing neighbor island education continues to be cost prohibitive, Kapiolani Community College has begun to build a telecommunication infrastructure to support quality distance education. The system requires portable stations that would support two-way interactive teleconferencing. This will allow EMS students on neighbor islands (Maui, Kauai, Hawaii) to participate in education as it is presented to students in the Paramedic classroom on Oahu. Providing this style of education will minimize the time a student is away from their

home. This opens the neighbor islands to the same quality of education as provided anywhere in the state.

Because Maui and Kauai have not been sites for Emergency Medical Technician and Paramedic education in recent years, there is insufficient equipment, supplies, and staff to support the Emergency Medical Services educational system. S.B. 3156, S.D. 1 will allow the State Department of Health to meet current needs for the medical education and will assist in nurturing quality graduates.

We strongly support the passage of S.B. 3156, S.D. 1. Thank you for allowing us to testify on this bill.