



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
April 5, 2016 at 1:00 p.m.

By
John Morton
Vice President for Community Colleges
University of Hawai'i System

SCR 90 – REQUESTING THE CHIEF OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AND INJURY PREVENTION SYSTEM BRANCH TO CONVENE AND CHAIR A WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP A COMMUNITY PARAMEDIC PROGRAM, INCLUDING EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS FOR CERTIFICATIONS, TO ALLEVIATE EMERGENCY SERVICES FROM RESPONDING TO NON-EMERGENCY CALLS.

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Dela Cruz, and members of the committee:

The University of Hawai'i Community Colleges (UHCC) supports the intent of SCR 90. This measure would convene a working group to develop a community paramedic program, including educational standards for certifications, to alleviate emergency services from responding to non-emergency calls.

The introduction of a community paramedic program will allow paramedics to respond to those individuals who utilize the emergency medical services system (911) as primary access to healthcare. These highly trained paramedics will be able to respond to those individuals, perform initial assessments, physical examinations, obtain past medical histories, and diagnostic examinations within their current scope of practice to evaluate their conditions.

These patients can then be referred to supportive services, such as social services, mental health, or other while reducing the need to transport them to a crowded hospital emergency department. These community paramedics will be able to provide non-emergency care, patient education, and referral services. This will minimize the need for a 911 ambulance, which should only be reserved for true emergencies.

The UH Community Colleges is in concurrence with the intent of SCR 90 and supports its passage. We look forward to continuing our active and committed engagement in these partnerships.