



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

**Testimony COMMENTING on HB 1874**  
**MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES**

REPRESENTATIVE DELLA AU BELATTI, CHAIR  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Hearing Date: Mon, February 8, 2016 3:00pm Room Number: 329

1 **Fiscal Implications:** The Department of Health (DOH) respectfully defers to the Governor's  
2 Executive Budget for the DOH's appropriations and personnel priorities. HB 1874 requests an  
3 unspecified amount of general funds for fiscal year 2016-2017 be appropriated to the DOH,  
4 Emergency Medical Services & Injury Prevention System Branch for a specialized emergency  
5 medical rapid response unit to include vehicle, personnel, and equipment.

6 **Department Testimony:** The Department recognizes the significant challenges to providing  
7 health care and emergency medical services to the expanding communities of Kauai. This  
8 measure seeks to augment the Kauai emergency medical services system for the county's  
9 residents and visitors. DOH contracts and funds a private ambulance service provider to operate  
10 5 ground ambulances on Kauai.

11 Using data from the DOH pre-hospital emergency medical database, we examined county  
12 ambulance response times for the 6-year period 2010-2015. Hanalei area (Zip code 96714)  
13 consistently exceeded the mandated DOH contract response time of 20 minutes or less. We  
14 found that over the 6-year period 34% of the Hanalei responses exceeded the mandated 20  
15 minute threshold. Adding a specialized rapid response unit and personnel resources might  
16 improve these 911 response times and allow for optimizing resources countywide.

17 The additional requested vehicle, personnel, and equipment are not in the DOH's FY 2016-2017  
18 budget. Should the legislature wish to increase Kauai EMS resources, then the requisite funds  
19 would need to be added to the DOH budget for FY 2016-2017 and beyond.

20 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

21 **Offered Amendments:** N/A

February 8, 2016

To: The Honorable Rep. Della Au Belatti, Chair  
The Honorable Rep. Richard Creagan, Vice Chair

Re: HB 1874: Relating to EMS

My name is Speedy Bailey and I've been working in EMS for the past (40) yrs. and I am the General Manager for American Medical Response (AMR) in Hawaii.

I am in support of HB 1874. AMR provides 911 response on Kauai, serving residents and visitors with access to high quality pre-hospital emergency care through a contract with Department of Health, Emergency Medical Services and Injury Prevention Branch.

Passage of HB 1874 would add significantly to the level of care to our visitors and residents as well as having faster response time during their emergency needs. Pre-hospital emergency medical response has been increasing and continues to increase due to Kauai's population growth, aging demographic and an increase in the number of households and visitors.

The last time a new emergency medical services ambulance unit was added on Kauai was in 1992, immediately after Hurricane Iniki. There have been no additional rapid response or ambulance units since. It is anticipated that Kauai's population demographic will change and include an aging population over the next few years. This increase demand for services requires additional resources.

The North Shore of Kauai is a large district which covers Moloaa, Kilauea, Princeville, Hanalei, Wainiha, and Ke'e Beach Park. Outside the Kilauea Unit, the nearest ambulance station is located Kapaa. The timeline to reach the only acute hospital on Kauai can be forty minutes or more. Similarly, the ambulance unit on the west district covers Eleele, Hanapepe, Kaumakani, Waimea, Kekaha, Polihale Beach Park, and up Kokee State Park. Response and transport times to the only Level 3 trauma center on Kauai may even take longer. If the ambulance that responds to a call for emergency medical service must respond from an out-of-district location, the response time is even longer. The movement of ambulances with patients from their own district creates a domino effect of lack of emergency medical services to other areas. A timely response to an emergency is critical to increase the likelihood of a good outcome for a sick or injured individual.

AMR has been continuously providing optimum EMS services above and beyond the funding it receives from the State. During flashflood conditions where Hanalei Bridge is closed, AMR provides additional ambulance unit to cover the Hanalei to Ke'e areas at no cost to the County or State.

A rapid response unit complements and adds to the existing resources that Kauai already has. It will help reduce death and disability among residents and visitors by providing immediate response to what was outlined previously.

I respectfully urge your committee's passage of HB 1874 to appropriate funds to establish a twenty-four-hour, seven-days-a-week emergency medical services Rapid Response Unit for Kauai.

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Friday, February 05, 2016 5:26 PM  
**To:** HLTtestimony  
**Cc:** joyamarshall0416@gmail.com  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for HB1874 on Feb 8, 2016 15:00PM\*

**HB1874**

Submitted on: 2/5/2016

Testimony for HLT on Feb 8, 2016 15:00PM in Conference Room 329

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Joy Marshall	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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**Sent:** Friday, February 05, 2016 2:24 PM  
**To:** HLTtestimony  
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**HB1874**

Submitted on: 2/5/2016

Testimony for HLT on Feb 8, 2016 15:00PM in Conference Room 329

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Cody Bonilla	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
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**To:** HLTtestimony  
**Cc:** poqqoppoqqop@gmail.com  
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**HB1874**

Submitted on: 2/6/2016

Testimony for HLT on Feb 8, 2016 15:00PM in Conference Room 329

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Paul Marshall	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
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**To:** HLTtestimony  
**Cc:** holly@hollylazo.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for HB1874 on Feb 8, 2016 15:00PM

**HB1874**

Submitted on: 2/6/2016

Testimony for HLT on Feb 8, 2016 15:00PM in Conference Room 329

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Hollis Lazo	Individual	Support	No

Comments: On Kaua`i, we have a considerable distance between our communities and the hospital with one very crowded road to get us there. We have one north shore ambulance which creates a serious problem when there are multiple injuries. The other side of the island probably faces similar challenges. This funding for additional ambulance and emergency response team members is desperately needed.

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February 5, 2016

Strongly Support HB1874

I am Tito Villanueva, Operations Manager/EMS Chief for American Medical Response (AMR), County of Kauai, strongly in support of H.B. 1874. AMR provides 911 response to every part of Kauai serving residents and visitors with access to high quality pre-hospital emergency care through a contract with Department of Health, Emergency Medical Services and Injury Prevention Branch.

Passage of H.B. 1874 would add significantly to the level of care to our visitors and residents as well as having faster response time during their emergency needs. Pre-hospital emergency medical response has been increasing and continues to increase due to Kauai's population growth, aging demographic and an increase in the number of households and visitors.

The last time a new emergency medical services ambulance unit was added on Kauai was in 1992, immediately after Hurricane Iniki. There have been no additional rapid response or ambulance units since. It is anticipated that Kauai's population demographic will change and include an aging population over the next few years. This increase demand for services requires additional resources.

The North Shore of Kauai is a large district which covers Moloaa, Kilauea, Princeville, Hanalei, Wainiha, and Ke'e Beach Park. Outside the Kilauea Unit, the nearest ambulance station is located Kapaa. The timeline to reach the only acute hospital on Kauai can be forty minutes or more. Similarly, the ambulance unit on the west district covers Eleele, Hanapepe, Kaumakani, Waimea, Kekaha, Polihale Beach Park, and up Kokee State Park. Response and transport times to the only Level 3 trauma center on Kauai may even take longer. If the ambulance that responds to a call for emergency medical service must respond from an out-of-district location, the response time is even longer. The movement of ambulances with patients from their own district creates a domino effect of lack of emergency medical services to other areas. A timely response to an emergency is critical to increase the likelihood of a good outcome for a sick or injured individual.

AMR has been continuously providing optimum EMS services above and beyond the funding it receives from the State. During flashflood conditions where Hanalei Bridge is closed, AMR provides additional ambulance unit to cover the Hanalei to Ke'e areas at no cost to the County or State.

A rapid response unit complements and adds to the existing resources that Kauai already has. It will help reduce death and disability among residents and visitors by providing immediate response to what was outlined previously.

I respectfully urge your committee's passage of H.B. 1874 to appropriate funds to establish a twenty-four –hour, seven-days-a-week emergency medical services rapid response unit for the County of Kauai. Please contact me should you have any question regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

Tito Villanueva

Kauai AMR Operations Manager  
4480 Kuene St  
Lihue, HI 96766  
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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
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**Cc:** akamaimom@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for HB1874 on Feb 8, 2016 15:00PM

**HB1874**

Submitted on: 2/6/2016

Testimony for HLT on Feb 8, 2016 15:00PM in Conference Room 329

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Felicia Cowden	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Please SUPPORT HB 1874. On Kaua`i, we have a considerable distance between our communities and the hospital with basically one road to get us there. With basically one north shore ambulance, we have a serious problem when there are multiple injuries. The other side of the island probably faces similar challenges. This funding for additional ambulance and emergency response team members is needed and valuable.

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Testimony for HB 1874

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Thomas Vander Wende. I am a Hawaii State Licensed M.I.C.T./Paramedic. After 33 years of service in EMS, First in the C&C Honolulu followed by 25 years in the County of Kauai, 22 years at M22 on the North Shore and 3 years on the South Shore, M24, I retired in 2014 and am now employed as part of a two man team of M.I.C.T./Paramedics to the President of the United Arab Emirates.

I came to Kauai in 1989. Back then the island population was much less and life was much slower. We would stand by for a shift on the ambulance and go maybe 1 or 2 shifts without any 911 calls. As time progressed, life became busier and the island population grew...and grew and grew.

By the time I retired in 2014, we were quite the busy EMS system. I do not have figures here today but I can tell you that the incidence of moving ambulances out of their own response areas to cover 911 calls in other areas was quite prevalent. When this occurs, response times are increased. There are now more and more calls where the Kapaa ambulance responds to the North Shore, an average response time of 20 min, where the Lihue ambulance responds to Poipu, Kapaa and North Shore, and the Poipu ambulance responds to Waimea as well as the Waimea ambulance responding to Poipu...the latter scenario is of greater concern as once the Waimea ambulance leaves, there is no other EMS coverage on that end of the island...same for the north shore.

The addition of a quick response EMS unit would greatly reduce mortality rates and enhance survivability due to the ability to move around freely and quickly. Moving this unit into areas when another unit is deployed would be of great value to the community.

It is my opinion that this vehicle is very much needed now due to the increase in population and the increase in *popularity* of the island of Kauai to visitors, not to mention the increase in EMS related 911 calls. Kauai also has the highest drowning rate in the state. Getting Advanced Life Support to an emergency faster than an ALS transport unit can respond would save lives exponentially. While Kauai is the only island that utilizes a two tiered emergency response system integrated with Kauai Fire Department, the KFD personnel are first responder level trained only which basic first aid is. And the KFD is also becoming more utilized and frequently have their limited resources stretched beyond their ability. While they are a valuable and necessary part of the advanced EMS system on Kauai, the highly respected professional members of KFD cannot provide ALS service. Kauai has one of the best EMS systems in the US today, all members are extremely skilled, highly trained professionals and each component compliments the system uniquely and adding this Quick Response Vehicle will ensure that Kauai remains one of the best systems into the future.

I hope the Hawaii State Legislature will approve the funding for this unit and keep Kauai and Hawaii the premier EMS system it is.

Regards,

***THOMAS VANDER WENDE***

M.I.C.T./Paramedic

Presidential Medical Wing

Ministry of Presidential Affairs

Royal Wing Services

Mafraq Hospital

Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates