
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HEALTH.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that residents of the
2 island of Hawaii would greatly benefit from the addition of an
3 advanced life support ambulance to augment the Hawaii county
4 emergency medical services system for residents of the Puna
5 area. The district of Puna is the fastest growing district in
6 the State; and thus, has increasing calls for emergency medical
7 services. Currently, the high demand for Puna emergency
8 services means Hilo ambulances need to travel to Puna for
9 emergency calls. Hilo ambulances sometimes need to travel over
10 thirty miles with some of those miles on substandard unpaved
11 roads. An ambulance designed for unpaved roads would require
12 less service and prevent emergency delays. Every Hilo ambulance
13 that responds to a Puna emergency means one less ambulance
14 available for Hilo, the second largest city in the State; and
15 thus, an ambulance based in Puna not only benefits Puna, but
16 also benefits the rest of East Hawaii Island.



1 The legislature further finds that access to primary health
2 care in Puna is a challenge for that community. For many
3 residents, primary care services are as much as one hour away.
4 Coupled with economic and transportation challenges, emergency
5 medical services have become the access point for health care to
6 many residents.

7 According to a recent survey of the Hawaii county fire
8 department's responses to the Puna district, it takes an average
9 round-trip of almost two hours to respond to each Puna emergency
10 call. Emergency calls from Puna have increased to over five
11 thousand calls per year. It is common for paramedics to have
12 over ten transports in each work shift, which equates to twenty
13 or more hours for each twenty-four hour shift. Because of this
14 increase in calls, Hilo paramedic units, which are the busiest
15 on the island, are often dispatched into the Puna district to
16 cover the area when the Puna paramedic units are responding to
17 other calls. This results in fewer Hilo paramedic units being
18 available to respond to Hilo emergency calls. Moreover, the
19 increased volume of calls creates a high risk for errors in
20 judgment caused by fatigue, which can impact the health and
21 safety of the patient.



1 The legislature further finds that a new advanced life
2 support ambulance will help reduce death and disability among
3 residents and visitors on the island of Hawaii. A timely
4 response to a 911 call is critical to increase the likelihood of
5 successful outcomes for injured or sick individuals. Given the
6 island's significant growth and aging population, an advanced
7 life support ambulance is needed and cost-effective.

8 The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds for an
9 advanced life support ambulance to be based in the Puna area on
10 the island of Hawaii and to be used during daily peak hours from
11 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., including the acquisition of a vehicle
12 and equipment, and funding personnel costs for state-certified
13 emergency medical service personnel.

14 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
15 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much
16 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2018-2019 for one
17 advanced life support ambulance to be:

18 (1) Based in Puna on the island of Hawaii; and

19 (2) Used during daily peak hours from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00
20 p.m.,



1 and to include the acquisition of a vehicle and equipment and
2 funding personnel costs for state-certified emergency medical
3 service personnel.

4 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
5 health for the purposes of this Act.

6 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000.



Report Title:

Emergency Medical Services; Advanced Life Support Ambulance

Description:

Appropriates funds for one advanced life support ambulance to be based in Puna on the island of Hawaii and to be used from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., and to include a vehicle, equipment, and personnel costs. (HB1616 HD1)

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