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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

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RELATING TO EMERGENCY RESPONSE VEHICLES.

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

- 1       SECTION 1.   **Findings and purpose.**   (a)   The legislature  
2   finds that a review of procedures for emergency response  
3   vehicles is necessary to address issues of current concern to  
4   the public.   Specifically, the issues that have been raised are:
- 5       (1)   Whether emergency response vehicle sirens are audible  
6           by motorists;
- 7       (2)   Whether motorists can see emergency response vehicle  
8           flashing lights;
- 9       (3)   Whether motorists give low priority to moving out of  
10       the way of emergency response vehicles or even ignore  
11       them;
- 12       (4)   Whether emergency response vehicle lights and sirens  
13       are effective warning devices;
- 14       (5)   Whether traveling with lights and sirens decreases  
15       emergency response vehicle response and transport  
16       times, thus saving lives;



(6) Whether the use of lights or sirens is necessary for responses that are not time-sensitive;

(7) Whether driving an emergency response vehicle using lights and sirens is more dangerous for the driver or the public than driving without using lights and sirens;

(8) Whether time-critical patients or victims can be identified to justify the use of lights and sirens at the time of dispatch in response to a 911 call;

(9) Whether there has ever been a lawsuit filed in the United States or Canada based upon an emergency response vehicle responding without using lights and sirens when the use of the lights and sirens would have been appropriate;

(10) Whether the public expects the use of lights and sirens for emergency response vehicles; and

(11) Whether it is common for a caller to request the services of an emergency response vehicle without the use of lights or sirens.

(b) In 1994, the National Association of Emergency Medical Services Physicians, together with the National Association of



1 State Emergency Medical Services Directors, published official  
2 practice-setting recommendations as follows:

3 (1) Emergency medical services medical directors should  
4 participate directly in the development of policies  
5 governing emergency medical vehicle response, patient  
6 transport, and the use of warning lights and sirens;

7 (2) The use of lights and sirens during an emergency  
8 response and during patient transport should be based  
9 on standardized protocols that take into account  
10 situational and patient problem assessments;

11 (3) Emergency medical services agencies should use an  
12 emergency medical dispatch priority reference system  
13 that has been developed in conjunction with and  
14 approved by the emergency medical services medical  
15 director to determine which requests for pre-hospital  
16 medical care require the use of warning lights and  
17 sirens;

18 (4) Except for suspected life-threatening, time-critical  
19 cases or cases involving multiple patients, response  
20 by more than one emergency medical vehicle using  
21 lights and sirens usually is unnecessary;



(5) The use of emergency warning lights and sirens should be limited to emergency responses and emergency-transport situations; and

(6) Scientific studies evaluating the effectiveness of warning lights and sirens under specific situations should be conducted and validated.

(c) The purpose of this Act is to establish an emergency response vehicle noise task force to:

(1) Evaluate the impact of sirens at night on communities that surround facilities for emergency response vehicles in urban and rural areas;

(2) Evaluate the relative effectiveness of using lights alone compared to using lights and sirens at night in enhancing the safety of first responders and the public; and

(3) Recommend rules on the appropriate use of lights and sirens by emergency response vehicles for adoption by the relevant agencies.

SECTION 2. Chapter 321, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to part XVIII to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:



1           "§321-       Emergency response vehicle noise task force. (a)

2   There is established an emergency response vehicle noise task  
3   force within the department for administrative purposes, as  
4   provided in section 26-35, to examine the use and effectiveness  
5   of lights and sirens by emergency response vehicles. The task  
6   force shall:

7           (1) Evaluate the impact of sirens at night on communities  
8               that surround facilities for emergency response  
9               vehicles in urban and rural areas;

10          (2) Evaluate the relative effectiveness of using lights  
11               alone compared to using lights and sirens at night in  
12               enhancing the safety of first responders, patients,  
13               and the public; and

14          (3) Recommend rules on the appropriate use of lights and  
15               sirens by emergency response vehicles for adoption by  
16               the relevant agencies.

17          (b) The task force shall consist of ten members to be  
18   appointed in the manner and to serve for the terms provided in  
19   section 26-34; provided that the members shall be:

20           (1) The director of health or the director's designee, who  
21               shall serve as chairperson;



- 1        (2) A neighborhood board member representing the public,  
2        to be appointed from a list of three nominees provided  
3        by the president of the senate;
- 4        (3) A resident of a neighbor island representing the  
5        public, to be appointed from a list of three nominees  
6        provided by the speaker of the house of  
7        representatives;
- 8        (4) A representative of a level II trauma center;
- 9        (5) A representative from the police department of each  
10       county;
- 11       (6) A representative from the fire department of each  
12       county;
- 13       (7) A representative of the state emergency medical  
14       services advisory committee;
- 15       (8) A representative of emergency medical service  
16       personnel, to be appointed from a list of three  
17       nominees provided by the director of health;
- 18       (9) A representative of the blind community, to be  
19       appointed from a list of three nominees provided by  
20       the director of health; and



1        (10) A representative of the deaf community, to be  
2                    appointed from a list of three nominees provided by  
3                    the director of health.

4        (c) Members shall not be compensated but shall be  
5        reimbursed for necessary expenses incurred, including travel  
6        expenses, in carrying out their duties. The department shall  
7        provide all necessary administrative, professional, technical,  
8        and clerical support required by the task force. No member  
9        shall be made subject to section 84-17, Hawaii Revised Statutes,  
10       solely because of that member's participation as a member of the  
11       task force. The task force shall be exempt from chapter 92,  
12       Hawaii Revised Statutes.

13       (d) The task force shall meet at least biannually,  
14       beginning in 2018.

15       (e) The task force shall submit a written report of its  
16       findings and recommendations, including any necessary proposed  
17       state and county legislation, to the legislature and to the  
18       council of each county, no later than twenty days prior to the  
19       convening of each regular session beginning with the regular  
20       session of 2019."



H.B. NO. 2065

1 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

2 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2018.

3

INTRODUCED BY:



JAN 19 2018





# H.B. NO. 2065

**Report Title:**

Emergency Response Vehicle Noise Task Force

**Description:**

Establishes an emergency response vehicle noise task force to determine the impact of the emergency response vehicle sirens in terms of excessive noise, the effect on public safety, and the relative effectiveness of the use of emergency lights instead of the use of sirens at night.

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