
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE MAYOR OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU AND THE
HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL TO CREATE A SEPARATE DEPARTMENT FOR
THE CITY'S OCEAN SAFETY AND LIFEGUARD SERVICES.

1 WHEREAS, the Mayor of the City and County of Honolulu
2 (Mayor) wields broad and flexible powers to propose an executive
3 reorganization under section 4-202 of the Revised Charter of the
4 City and County of Honolulu 1973 (Amended 2017 Edition)
5 (Charter); and
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7 WHEREAS, pursuant to Charter section 4-202, entitled
8 "Executive Reorganization Power", "In the interest of
9 administrative efficiency, effectiveness and economy, the mayor,
10 and only the mayor, may propose to the council that the duties
11 and functions of existing departments or agencies of the
12 executive branch, excepting departments or agencies reporting
13 directly to the mayor and not including semi-autonomous
14 agencies, be changed or departments or agencies be created,
15 combined, rearranged, renamed or eliminated."; and
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17 WHEREAS, Charter section 4-202 further provides, "Such
18 proposal or proposals shall take effect upon approval of the
19 council or sixty days after transmittal to the council unless
20 rejected by a two-thirds vote of the council's entire
21 membership."; and
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23 WHEREAS, by Resolution 21-122, adopted by the Honolulu City
24 Council on June 2, 2021, the Council expressed its support for
25 separating the Ocean Safety and Lifeguard Services Division from
26 the City's Department of Emergency Services by urging the Mayor
27 to reorganize; and
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29 WHEREAS, the City's Department of Emergency Services is
30 comprised of the Emergency Medical Services Division (EMS), the



1 Ocean Safety and Lifeguard Services Division (Ocean Safety), and
2 the Health Services Branch; and
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4 WHEREAS, Charter section 6-603 tasks the Director of
5 Emergency Services, who heads the Department of Emergency
6 Services, with:
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8 (1) As to medical services, serving as the primary
9 provider of emergency medical care; developing
10 programs and providing training and educational
11 programs related to emergency medical services and
12 injury prevention; taking responsibility for medical
13 matters relating to public health and welfare; and
14 taking responsibility for the administration of the
15 City's health services programs and medical
16 evaluations of current and prospective City employees;
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18 (2) As to ocean safety, serving as the primary responder
19 to emergencies arising on the beach and in the near
20 shore waters; taking responsibility for ocean safety
21 training, educational, and risk reduction programs
22 relating to ocean safety; and performing such other
23 duties as may be required by law; and
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25 (3) Performing such duties as may be required by law; and
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27 WHEREAS, Ocean Safety's kuleana encompasses one hundred
28 ninety eight miles of Oahu's coastline; and
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30 WHEREAS, Ocean Safety personnel and its lifeguards perform
31 public safety and service functions, including staffing forty-
32 one lifeguard towers, ocean rescues, emergency medical
33 treatment, mobile patrol and response, and education and
34 prevention strategies to assist the roughly eighteen million
35 beach users on Oahu each year; and
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37 WHEREAS, Ocean Safety makes thousands of rescues and takes
38 tens of thousands of preventive actions annually to keep Oahu's
39 residents and visitors safe; and
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1 WHEREAS, for fiscal year 2021, EMS had 328.5 full-time
2 equivalent positions, while Ocean Safety had 251 full-time
3 equivalent positions; and
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5 WHEREAS, the State currently reimburses the City for costs
6 incurred by the City for the provision of emergency medical
7 services separate and apart from the budget and costs associated
8 with the operations of Ocean Safety; and
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10 WHEREAS, due to the enactment of Act 208, Session Laws of
11 Hawaii 2021, the Department of Health will transfer certain
12 duties, functions, and powers relating to emergency medical
13 services to the City, and the workload of EMS is expected to
14 significantly increase while reimbursement for costs incurred by
15 the City for emergency medical services is expected to
16 significantly decline beginning in fiscal year 2023; and
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18 WHEREAS, the Legislature believes that it may be in the
19 best interest of the City and in the interest of administrative
20 efficiency, effectiveness, and economy to create a separate
21 department for the Ocean Safety duties, functions, and personnel
22 to allow for greater autonomy in its budget and operations, and
23 to ensure that the needs of Ocean Safety employees are best
24 served; now, therefore,
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26 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
27 Thirty-first Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
28 of 2022, the Senate concurring, that the Mayor of the City and
29 County of Honolulu and the Honolulu City Council are urged to
30 create a separate department for the City's ocean safety and
31 lifeguard services; and
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33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
34 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Mayor of the City
35 and County of Honolulu; Chair of the Honolulu City Council;
36 Managing Director of the City and County of Honolulu; and
37 Director of Emergency Services of the City and County of
38 Honolulu.
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OFFERED BY: 

MAR 11 2022

