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# HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE COUNTIES TO RECOGNIZE 911 EMERGENCY SERVICES  
DISPATCHERS AS FIRST RESPONDERS IN THEIR RESPECTIVE  
JURISDICTIONS.

1           WHEREAS, 911 emergency services dispatchers in the City and  
2 County of Honolulu, County of Hawaii, County of Kauai, and  
3 County of Maui are part of the critical infrastructure of the  
4 public safety system in each of the jurisdictions; and

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6           WHEREAS, these emergency services personnel play a critical  
7 role in emergency response, as these personnel are very often  
8 the first public safety employees to handle an emergency; are  
9 the first line of communication for persons needing law  
10 enforcement, fire, or medical response; and are a lifeline to  
11 law enforcement, fire, and medical responders in the field; and

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13           WHEREAS, 911 emergency services dispatchers are responsible  
14 for an array of duties and services, including operating  
15 advanced automated terminals, using multiple robust lifesaving  
16 procedures and technologies to obtain critical information from  
17 callers, analyzing the information provided to them, and, in  
18 some cases, utilizing specialized mapping systems to send the  
19 appropriate and closest available emergency unit and communicate  
20 the best course of action for the caller to take before the  
21 emergency unit arrives; and

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23           WHEREAS, 911 emergency services dispatchers deal with  
24 immensely stressful situations as their job responsibilities  
25 involve making split-second decisions that affect the safety and  
26 well-being of the public and field responders and delivering  
27 vital emergency pre-arrival instructions daily; and

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29           WHEREAS, information gathered and relayed by 911 emergency  
30 services dispatchers can mean the difference between life and



1 death for callers and field responders; 911 emergency services  
2 dispatchers provide an integral basis for effective public  
3 safety response and often can prevent incidents from worsening  
4 before field responders arrive; and

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6 WHEREAS, with the emergence of Next Generation 911, 911  
7 emergency services dispatchers may be subject to graphic  
8 photographs and audio and live video streaming of emergency  
9 situations; and

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11 WHEREAS, although 911 emergency services dispatchers are  
12 not physically at the scene of emergencies, they often suffer  
13 from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder as their job duties include  
14 answering multiple traumatic calls, banding successful radio  
15 incidents, and communicating with people in states of distress,  
16 fear, or injury; and

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18 WHEREAS, 911 emergency services dispatchers receive  
19 specialized training and must be certified to work in 911  
20 emergency telecommunications centers in their respective  
21 jurisdictions; and

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23 WHEREAS, in 2020, the California State Legislature passed  
24 Assembly Bill 1945, which defines a first responder as an  
25 employee of the state or a local public agency who provides  
26 emergency response services, including a peace officer; a  
27 firefighter; a paramedic; an emergency medical technician; or a  
28 public safety dispatcher or public safety telecommunicator,  
29 which is defined as an individual employed by a public safety  
30 agency, as the initial first responder, whose primary  
31 responsibility is to receive, process, transmit, or dispatch  
32 emergency and nonemergency calls for law enforcement, fire,  
33 emergency medical, and other public safety services by  
34 telephone, radio, or other communication device, and includes an  
35 individual who promotes from this position and supervises  
36 individuals who perform these functions; and

37  
38 WHEREAS, pursuant to Act 63, Session Laws of Hawaii 2021,  
39 the Department of Human Resources Development submitted a report  
40 to the Legislature in which the counties found that the work  
41 performed by other dispatchers are not comparable to that of  
42 emergency services dispatcher positions; now, therefore,



# H.C.R. NO. 105

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2 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the  
3 Thirty-first Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session  
4 of 2022, the Senate concurring, that the counties are urged to  
5 recognize emergency services dispatchers, who receive, dispatch,  
6 and respond to 911 calls, texts, and other requests, as first  
7 responders in their respective jurisdictions; and

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9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the job classifications of 911  
10 emergency services dispatchers be updated to include the duties  
11 of 911 emergency services dispatchers as first responders; and

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13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
14 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Mayors and Council  
15 Chairs of the City and County of Honolulu and Counties of  
16 Hawaii, Kauai, and Maui.

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OFFERED BY: *Nadine K. Puhuanui*

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