

MAR 10 2022

SENATE 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



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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

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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,



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

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

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

OFFERED BY: 
By Request

