

MAR 10 2022

SENATE 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

5
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

12
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

22
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

28
29 WHEREAS, information gathered and relayed by 911 emergency
30 services dispatchers can mean the difference between life and
31 death for callers and field responders; 911 emergency services
32 dispatchers provide an integral basis for effective public



S.R. NO. 72

1 safety response and often can prevent incidents from worsening
2 before field responders arrive; and

3
4 WHEREAS, with the emergence of Next Generation 911, 911
5 emergency services dispatchers may be subject to graphic
6 photographs and audio and live video streaming of emergency
7 situations; and

8
9 WHEREAS, although 911 emergency services dispatchers are
10 not physically at the scene of emergencies, they often suffer
11 from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder as their job duties include
12 answering multiple traumatic calls, banding successful radio
13 incidents, and communicating with people in states of distress,
14 fear, or injury; and

15
16 WHEREAS, 911 emergency services dispatchers receive
17 specialized training and must be certified to work in 911
18 emergency telecommunications centers in their respective
19 jurisdictions; and

20
21 WHEREAS, in 2020, the California State Legislature passed
22 Assembly Bill 1945, which defines a first responder as an
23 employee of the state or a local public agency who provides
24 emergency response services, including a peace officer; a
25 firefighter; a paramedic; an emergency medical technician; or a
26 public safety dispatcher or public safety telecommunicator,
27 which is defined as an individual employed by a public safety
28 agency, as the initial first responder, whose primary
29 responsibility is to receive, process, transmit, or dispatch
30 emergency and nonemergency calls for law enforcement, fire,
31 emergency medical, and other public safety services by
32 telephone, radio, or other communication device, and includes an
33 individual who promotes from this position and supervises
34 individuals who perform these functions; and

35
36 WHEREAS, pursuant to Act 63, Session Laws of Hawaii 2021,
37 the Department of Human Resources Development submitted a report
38 to the Legislature in which the counties found that the work
39 performed by other dispatchers are not comparable to that of
40 emergency services dispatcher positions; now, therefore,
41



S.R. NO. 72

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

7
 8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the job classifications of 911
 9 emergency services dispatchers be updated to include the duties
 10 of 911 emergency services dispatchers as first responders; and

11
 12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
 13 Resolution be transmitted to the Mayors and Council Chairs of
 14 the City and County of Honolulu and Counties of Hawaii, Kauai,
 15 and Maui.

16
 17
 18

OFFERED BY: MM D-UM
By Request

