

**STATE HEALTH PLANNING
AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY**
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH - KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO

JOSH GREEN, MD
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII
KE KIA'ĀINA O KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII

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March 23, 2026

TO: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
Representative Gregg Takayama, Chair
Representative Sue L. Keohokapu-Lee Loy, Vice Chair

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & HOMELESSNESS
Representative Lisa Marten, Chair
Representative Ikaika Olds, Vice Chair
Honorable Members

FROM: John C. (Jack) Lewin, MD, Administrator, SHPDA, and Sr. Advisor to
Governor Josh Green, MD on Healthcare Innovation

RE: **SB 2934 -- RELATING TO AMBULANCES**

HEARING: Wednesday, March 25, 2026 @ 09:30 am; Conference Room 329

POSITION: SUPPORT with COMMENTS

Testimony:

SHPDA strongly supports SB2934-SD1, with comments.

This bill proposes to purchase one advanced life support (ALS) ambulance and equipment for central Maui along with the personnel needed. As our island population grows, the need to meet the healthcare needs of the population is also necessary.

Central Maui, now facing substantial population growth, lacks an ALS ambulance. This leads to slower response times in medical emergencies, increasing risks of preventable death or long-term disability. An additional ambulance would fill this gap.

The measure's statewide air ambulance component also boosts equity and reliability across all islands. Flexible air coverage complements ground support, saving lives during time-sensitive emergencies.

Thank you for hearing SB 2934-SD1 and mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

■ -- Jack Lewin, MD, Administrator, SHPDA



OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

‘Ōlelo Hō‘ike ‘Aha Kau Kānāwai

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 2934 SD1

RELATING TO AMBULANCES

Ke Kōmike Hale o ke Olakino

(House Committee on Health)

Ke Kapitala ‘o Hawai‘i

(Hawai‘i State Capitol)

Malaki 25, 2026

9:30 AM

Lumi 329

Aloha e Chair San Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and Members of the House Committee on Health:

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS SB2934 SD1** which appropriates funds to purchase one advanced life support ambulance and related equipment to be based in central Maui and to fund pay-related personnel costs for one state-certified emergency medical technician and one state-certified paramedic.

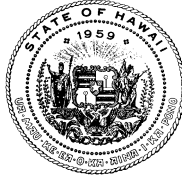
OHA supports this measure because reliable emergency medical access is a basic health equity issue, especially in rural and geographically isolated areas where distance, workforce shortages, and transportation constraints can significantly affect outcomes. Adding advanced life support ambulance capacity in central Maui will help improve timely emergency response for residents and visitors when minutes matter most.

This need carries particular importance for Native Hawaiian communities. Native Hawaiians continue to experience disproportionate burdens in time-sensitive health conditions, including cardiovascular disease, and Hawai‘i’s Heart Disease and Stroke Plan¹ identifies Native Hawaiians as a priority population for prevention and systems improvement. Improving response time, triage, transport capacity, and continuity of care can help reduce preventable death and long-term disability for OHA beneficiaries and communities across the pae ‘āina.

This bill also reflects a practical response to growth in central Maui. As population increases, emergency medical infrastructure must keep pace to ensure timely access to care. Investing in an additional advanced life support ambulance and related personnel helps strengthen regional readiness and supports more equitable access to emergency services on Maui.

¹ Hawai‘i State Department of Health, Healthy Hawai‘i Strategic Plan, Heart Disease and Stroke, <https://hhsp.hawaii.gov/program-area/8>

For these reasons, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs respectfully urges this Committee to **PASS SB2934 SD1**. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important measure.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
P. O. Box 3378
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**Testimony in SUPPORT of (SB2934 SD1)
RELATING TO AMBULANCES**

REPRESENTATIVE GREGG TAKAYAMA, CHAIR
REPRESENTATIVE SUE L. KEOHOKAPU-LEE LOY, VICE CHAIR
COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & HOMELESSNESS

Wednesday, March 25, 2026 at 9:30 AM | Room Number: 329

1 **Fiscal Implications:** The Department of Health (“Department”) respectfully requests
2 \$1,750,000.00 and recurring funding to support the ambulance unit, staffing, station
3 operations, and related needs, and requests that this measure be considered as a vehicle to
4 provide this needed funding so long as it does not supplant the priorities and requests outlined
5 in the Governor's executive budget request.

6 **Department Position:** The Department strongly supports this measure offering testimony with
7 proposed amendments.

8 **Department Testimony:** The Emergency Medical Services & Injury Prevention Systems Branch
9 (EMSIPSB), on behalf of the Department, respectfully submits this testimony in strong support
10 of this measure, while respectfully requesting a targeted amendment to ensure alignment with
11 related legislation and statewide Emergency Medical Services (EMS) planning efforts.

12 In partnership with county EMS leadership, EMSIPSB has conducted a comprehensive review
13 and primary needs assessment of ground ambulance resources statewide, with a forward-
14 looking analysis of system needs over the next five years. This assessment was informed by
15 current and historical 911 EMS response data, operational demand, population growth,
16 geographic access, and system performance benchmarks.

1 **Data:** Statewide 911 EMS data clearly demonstrate that Maui County is experiencing sustained
2 and increasing demand for emergency medical services, particularly within Central Maui. Based
3 on calendar year 2025 Maui County EMS data, there were more than 15,790 total 911 EMS
4 responses countywide. Of these, over 5,342 emergency responses originated from Central Maui
5 alone, accounting for more than 34 percent of all EMS responses in the county. The Kahului and
6 Wailuku service areas, along with the broader Central Maui region, represent the highest
7 concentration of EMS demand and consistently experience significant resource strain.

8 The EMSIPSB recognizes that in calendar year 2025, approximately 90 percent of 911 emergent
9 EMS calls across Maui County were responded to in less than 19 minutes. EMSIPSB also
10 monitors quality benchmarks that measure first patient contact time, with a target that 90
11 percent of emergent responses achieve first patient contact in less than 11 minutes.
12 Additionally, national EMS benchmarks recommend transport times from scene to hospital of
13 less than 25 minutes. In Maui County, the current median transport time is approximately 34
14 minutes, reflecting the county's geographic challenges and the presence of remote and rural
15 areas that are far from acute care hospitals.

16 While the EMS system continues to perform at a high level given these constraints, EMSIPSB
17 recognizes that sustained call volume, increasing demand in Central Maui, and longer transport
18 times place ongoing pressure on unit availability and response reliability. EMSIPSB believes that
19 the addition of an advanced life support 911 ambulance and associated staffing resources will
20 improve system resilience, reduce unit hour utilization, and enhance overall quality of care for
21 Maui County's 911 EMS system.

22 EMSIPSB strongly supports the portion of Senate Bill 2934 Senate Draft 1 (SB2934 SD1) that
23 appropriates funding for an additional 911 advanced life support ambulance to be based in
24 Central Maui. This request aligns with the Department's strategic, data-driven plan for the
25 placement of additional 911 EMS resources over the next five years.

- 1 Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony and for your continued commitment to
- 2 strengthening Hawaii's EMS system.

Council Chair
Alice L. Lee

Vice-Chair
Yuki Lei K. Sugimura

Councilmembers
Kauanoë Batangan
Tom Cook
Gabe Johnson
Tamara Paltin
Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez
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Nohelani U'u-Hodgins



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David M. Raatz, Jr., Esq.


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COUNTY COUNCIL
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www.MauiCounty.us

March 20, 2026

TO: The Honorable Gregg Takayama, Chair
House Committee on Health

The Honorable Lisa Marten, Chair
House Committee on Human Services & Homelessness

FROM: Alice L. Lee
Council Chair 

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF MARCH 25, 2026; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2934, SD1, RELATING TO AMBULANCES**

I support this measure to fund the Department of Health to fund an advanced life support ambulance and related equipment and personnel to be based in Central Maui.

The Maui County Council has not had the opportunity to take a formal position on this measure. Therefore, I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Maui County Council.

I support this measure for the following reasons:

1. Central Maui's growing population has a significant need for additional emergency services.
2. Funding this effort would help reduce death and disability among residents and visitors by ensuring more timely response to 911 calls.
3. This measure is consistent with Maui Island Plan policy 4.6.1.f: "Encourage expansion and improved access to emergency care in all communities."

Thank you for your consideration.

ocs:proj:legis:26legis:26testimony:sb2934sd1_paf25-331(15)_ebm

SB-2934-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/23/2026 10:29:35 AM

Testimony for HLT on 3/25/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Speedy Bailey	AMR	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support.

SB-2934-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/20/2026 4:03:35 PM

Testimony for HLT on 3/25/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Kingdon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Legislators:

I am submitting this testimony representing only myself and my community as a citizen, though it is relevant that I am a working paramedic and also have a background in public health and EMS system design.

I am writing in support of SB2934 (and companion bill HB2173) with the following corrections/amendments that I understand are in progress:

- Currently, Central Maui (Wailuku, Kahului, Waikapu, Waiehu, Waihee, Puunene, Sprecklesville) only has *one* state-contracted 9-1-1 ambulance, based in Wailuku. Until corrected/amended, the current language of the bill indicates there are two. A second ambulance currently based in Kahului is a private ambulance that focuses on inter-facility transfers and cannot be relied upon for 9-1-1 EMS coverage. Thus, Maui's most populous and high call-volume district has only (1) 9-1-1 ambulance, whereas other highly populated districts such as West, South, and Upcountry Maui each have two. Even Molokai now has two. Other than Central Maui, the only other districts with only one state-contracted 9-1-1 ambulance in Maui County are the rural areas of Lanai and Hana.
- Current language in this bill referencing "air ambulance services" should be removed, as this statute should focus on improvements to our ground EMS coverage. For many years, our Maui County EMS system did in fact include Maui Medevac helicopter services, however since rotor craft service was cleaved from our system by the State of Hawaii Department of Health in the last iteration of its RFP/contract process, air services should not be conflated with ground in this bill. We are fortunate to have a good working relationship with REACH 48, which has taken on sole responsibility for EMS helicopter services within Maui County.

Maui County is in desperate need of this additional asset in our Central district, and I do not use the term 'desperate' lightly. Again, this is the most populous and high-volume district within our system, where population growth and changes in population density are causing further strain. When out-of-district response and ambulance units are called into the 'vortex' of Central Maui, this has a repercussive effect, including depletion of paramedic resources in those other districts. Other first responders such as the Maui County Fire Department are valuable, but are strictly Basic Life Support (BLS) providers. Maui County EMS is the only Advanced Life Support (ALS) provider, with paramedics on each unit, bringing extensive training and scope of practice

including advanced airways, vascular access, dozens of emergency medications, life-saving cardiovascular interventions and cardiothoracic procedures, and other essential ALS assessment and treatment modalities to the patient's side.

An additional ambulance is needed not only for routine response, but also as a crucial asset in the event of multiple casualty incidents (MCI). From frequent moderate-scale MCIs, such as multi-vehicle collisions, to infrequent but large-scale MCIs, such as firestorms and tsunamis, Maui County residents and state legislators should be shocked that once the Wailuku ambulance is on a case, the next-closest state-contracted ambulances would be coming from Kihei and Haiku (over 8 miles and 12 miles from Kahului proper, respectively) - and that is only if those ambulances are in station and not already on calls of their own. We do have one paramedic special response unit based in Ma'alaea, which provides rapid response to districts including Central Maui, but as our only unit capable of and nationally recognized for special operations including marine ALS (launching with Coast Guard Station Maui), tactical paramedicine (embedding with Maui Police SRT), and medical incident command (such as at the August 2023 firestorms), this unit needs to be preserved as a non-transporting specialized asset - but does need plentiful ambulances to whom a response unit paramedic may delegate patients as they triage casualties.

****As I write this, in fact, Maui County EMS is in the midst of responding to the second in back-to-back Kona Low weather disasters. Our EMS personnel have been responding both in the field and behind-the-scenes in the county's Emergency Operations Center to ensure that the community receives the best medical response, care, and transport possible, in spite of extreme hazards and other challenges. In addition to 9-1-1 responses, our system has had to absorb other massive tasks, such as evacuating Kula Hospital of their long-term care patients due to storm damage. Doing all of this without an additional 9-1-1 ambulance in our busiest district has left us scrambling, with units from many miles away (such as Lahaina and Kula) pulled out of their districts to field calls for service in Kahului.****

The community will suffer longer response times and increased morbidity and mortality without improvement of our coverage via the crucial addition of this Central Maui ambulance.

Thank you for your serious consideration.

Sincerely,

David Kingdon, MPH, Paramedic
Wailuku, Hawaii

SB-2934-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/20/2026 6:55:06 PM

Testimony for HLT on 3/25/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
NATHAN DANG	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Legislators:

I am submitting this testimony representing only myself and my community as a citizen, though it is relevant that I am a working paramedic that spent my 10 years working at the central maui ambulance station.

I am writing in support of SB2934 (and companion bill HB2173) with the following corrections/amendments that I understand are in progress:

- Currently, **Central Maui** (Wailuku, Kahului, Waikapu, Waiehu, Waihee, Puunene, Sprecklesville) only has **ONE** state-contracted 9-1-1 ambulance, based in Wailuku. Until corrected/amended, the current language of the bill indicates there are two. A second ambulance currently based in Kahului is a private ambulance that focuses on inter-facility transfers and cannot be relied upon for 9-1-1 EMS coverage. Thus, Maui's most populous and high call-volume district has only (1) 9-1-1 ambulance, whereas other highly populated districts such as West, South, and Upcountry Maui each have two. Even Molokai now has two. Other than Central Maui, the only other districts with only one state-contracted 9-1-1 ambulance in Maui County are the rural areas of Lanai and Hana.
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The community will suffer longer response times and increased morbidity and mortality without improvement of our coverage via the crucial addition of this Central Maui ambulance.

Thank you for your serious consideration.

Sincerely,

Nathan Dang, Paramedic, RN
Makawao, Hawaii

SB-2934-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/21/2026 2:07:35 PM

Testimony for HLT on 3/25/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
jamie pagan	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Aloha, my name is Jamie Pagan. I am writing in support of SB2934, specifically to establish an additional 911 transport ambulance in the Kahului-Wailuku district. I am not only a resident in Central Maui, but I am also an employee of Maui EMS for over 20 years. I see the growing demand for emergency medical services and the lack of resources available to meet it firsthand. Approximately one-third of EMS calls are in Central Maui. The outer districts are strained as they respond to this area daily to support the single ambulance. I have seen patients located just minutes from the hospital suffer critical delays because no ambulance was immediately available, sometimes with fatal consequences.

The last time a new transport ambulance was added to the island was in 2004. In the more than two decades since, our system has remained essentially unchanged in capacity, despite demanding increases in 911 EMS calls. Moloka‘i was recently awarded a second ambulance, an important and appropriate investment for that community, and Maui has an even higher need. The Central Maui district population has increased, tourism has grown, and 911 call volume has more than doubled.

I also encourage keeping “air ambulance services” separate from SB2934. While air transport is valuable, it addresses a different operational need. The Hawai‘i Department of Health EMS division has recently separated air and ground EMS transport, and this distinction should be maintained to ensure Central Maui receives the ground ambulance resources it urgently needs.

Adding a 911 transport ambulance in Kahului–Wailuku is crucial to meet current demand and save lives. Ensuring the language of the bill appropriately addresses the ground need is equally important. I respectfully urge your full consideration.

SB-2934-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/23/2026 1:21:26 PM

Testimony for HLT on 3/25/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Natalie Graham-Wood	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB2934, SD1. My name is Natalie Graham-Wood. Although I live on Oahu, my grandson and his young family live in central Maui.

SB-2934-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/23/2026 2:34:36 PM

Testimony for HLT on 3/25/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Victor K. Ramos	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

STONGLY SUPPORT THIS BILL.