



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES | KA 'OIHANA LOIHELU A LAWELAWE LAULĀ

P.O. BOX 119, HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0119

TESTIMONY SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 62 S.D.1

RELATING TO 911 SERVICES

**PRESENTATION TO THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & PUBLIC SAFETY &
MILITARY AFFAIRS**

BY

ROYCE M. MURAKAMI

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF STATE OF HAWAII 911 BOARD

APRIL 2, 2026

Chair McKelvey, Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Lee and members of the Government Operations and Public Safety & Military Affairs Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on SCR 62 S.D.1, requesting the 911 Board to establish or utilize an appropriate working group to engage with the disability community to address continuing access issues in the state's emergency and 911 response systems. The 911 Board (the Board) **SUPPORTS** SCR 62 S.D.1.

As highlighted in testimony on H.B. 1577 H.D.1, ensuring that emergency responders have advanced access to critical medical, mobility, and communication information can significantly improve response outcomes and save lives. While the Board has made significant strides in enhancing our emergency response system, persistent challenges remain, including differences in system integration across counties, vendor limitations, and privacy concerns. The Board believes that utilizing an existing working group offers a practical and collaborative way to address these issues thoroughly, without duplicating statutory responsibilities or overextending limited resources. This process will help identify barriers, evaluate current technologies, consider privacy and cybersecurity issues, and develop best practices to safeguard the safety and dignity of every resident.

In summary, the Board **SUPPORTS** SCR 62 S.D.1 and the goal of improving emergency response through enhanced information sharing. We remain committed to implementing a solution that meets the needs of both the disability community and the general public.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on SCR 62 S.D.1.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



SIERRA WHITESIDE
CHAIRPERSON

DAINTRY BARTOLDUS
EXECUTIVE ADMINISTRATOR

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
STATE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
'A'UNIKE MOKU'ĀPUNI NO KA NĀ KĀWAI KULA
PRINCESS VICTORIA KAMĀMALU BUILDING
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April 2, 2026

The Honorable Senator Angus L.K. McKelvey, Chair
Senate Committee on Government Operations
The Honorable Senator Carol Fukunaga, Chair
Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs
The Thirty-Third Legislature
State Capitol
State of Hawai'i
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair's McKelvey and Fukunaga, and Committee Members:

SUBJECT: SCR 62 Proposed SD1- 911 REQUESTING THE 911 BOARD TO ESTABLISH OR UTILIZE AN APPROPRIATE WORKING GROUP TO ENGAGE WITH THE DISABILITY COMMUNITY TO ADDRESS CONTINUING ACCESS ISSUES IN TH STATE'S EMERGENCY AND 911 RESPONSE SYSTEM (Proposed SD1)

The State Council on Developmental Disabilities supports SCR62 Proposed SD1, which requests the 911 Board to establish or utilize an appropriate working group to engage with the disability community to address continuing access issues in the state's emergency and 911 response systems.

The Council continues to believe that the approach proposed in HB 1577, a statewide pilot of an emergency safety profile system, would have provided a more direct and timely path to implementation. However, as this measure has moved to a working group structure, we support continued progress to address long-standing access barriers within Hawai'i's emergency and 911 response systems.

The Council also wishes to express its sincere appreciation to the 911 Board for recognizing the importance of including the disability community in this process. We acknowledge the Board's openness in acknowledging past gaps in engagement and their commitment to ensuring that individuals with disabilities and other vulnerable populations are meaningfully included moving forward. This type of partnership is critical to building systems that truly work for everyone.

We would like to take this opportunity to emphasize that individuals with disabilities, kupuna, and others with access and functional needs experience improved outcomes when first responders have advance, voluntary access to critical information, including medical, mobility, communication, and behavioral needs. This type of information sharing reduces confusion, supports effective communication, and can save lives.

Emergency events in Hawai'i, such as the Maui wildfires, further underscore the urgent need for systems that allow first responders to quickly understand and respond to the needs of individuals with access and functional needs. As the working group evaluates options, it is critical that the discussion remains grounded in functionality, not just process.

The Council respectfully emphasizes that any recommended system must, at a minimum:

- Support both landline and mobile integration, ensuring individuals who rely on landlines are not excluded;
- Have a tab to insert a person's Access and Functional Needs (AFN)
- Allow multiple addresses, phone numbers, and associated individuals, recognizing the realities of shared caregiving, multigenerational households, and support networks;
- Enable voluntary, person-centered profiles that include medical, mobility, communication, and behavioral information;
- Be accessible to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and others with diverse access needs, including simple user interfaces and support for caregivers;
- Ensure strong privacy protections, with information only available to dispatchers at the time of a 911 call;
- Be available statewide, with consistency across counties.

Systems such as Smart911 demonstrate that these capabilities are feasible and already in use. While the Council supports identifying the best-fit solution for Hawai'i, these core features are essential and should not be compromised.

Finally, the Council emphasizes that this working group must lead to clear, actionable recommendations and a defined path to implementation. Individuals with disabilities have already articulated the need, this process should focus on delivering solutions.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support, with comments, for SCR 62 Proposed SD1.

Sincerely,



Daintry Bartoldus
Executive Administrator



JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII
KE KIA'ĀINA O KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII

KENNETH FINK, MD, MGA, MPH
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

**STATE OF HAWAII
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HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-2831

CAROLINE CADIRAO
DIRECTOR
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**Testimony in SUPPORT of SCR 62 S.D.1
REQUESTING THE 911 BOARD TO ESTABLISH OR UTILIZE AN APPROPRIATE
WORKING GROUP TO ENGAGE WITH THE DISABILITY COMMUNITY TO
ADDRESS CONTINUING ACCESS ISSUES in the STATE'S EMERGENCY AND 911
RESPONSE SYSTEMS**

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Senator Angus L.K. McKelvey, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

Senator Carol Fukunaga, Chair
Senator Chris Lee, Vice Chair

Testimony of Caroline Cadirao
Director, Executive Office on Aging
Attached Agency to the Department of Health

Hearing: Thursday, April 2, 2026, 3:15 p.m.

Conference Room: 225

- 1 The Executive Office on Aging strongly supports SCR62 Proposed SD1, which requests the 911
- 2 Board to establish or utilize an appropriate working group to engage with the disability
- 3 community to address continuing access issues in the state's emergency and 911 response
- 4 systems. Many of the same concerns raised by the Council on Developmental Disabilities hold
- 5 true for older adults who also face limitations engaging with the state's 911 response system.
- 6 We support this measure that will lead to a more enhanced approach to the 911 response system.



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Apr 2, 2026

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We work together with the community and consumers to improve the quality of life through individual choices and access to services.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Roxanne U. Bolden

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Scott Suzuki
Sheila Castaneda
Jennifer Hartssock

The Honorable Angus L.K. McKelvey, Chair
Senate Committee on Government Operations
The Honorable Carol Fukunaga, Chair
Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs
The Thirty-Third Legislature
State Capitol
State of Hawaii
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

SUBJECT: SCR62 SD1 – Requesting The 911 Board to Establish or Utilize an Appropriate Working Group to Engage with the Disability Community to Address Continuing Access Issues in the State’s Emergency and 911 Response Systems

Chair and Members of the Committee:

Aloha Independent Living Hawaii (AILH) submits this testimony in **support of SCR62 SD1**, which requests the 911 Board to establish or utilize an appropriate working group to engage with the disability community to address continuing access issues in the State’s emergency and 911 response systems. The updated draft shifts from a construction-focused shelter measure to a more practical and timely solution centered on communication access, person-centered emergency response, privacy, and stakeholder coordination.

AILH appreciates that the revised resolution reflects testimony on HB1577 HD1, and recognizes that individuals with disabilities, access needs, and other functional needs face distinct barriers when interacting with 911 systems, especially during high-stress emergencies. The resolution also appropriately acknowledges the 911 Board’s concerns about duplication, vendor limitations, county-level integration differences, and privacy considerations, then responds with a flexible working-group approach rather than a rigid statutory mandate.



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From an Independent Living perspective, this change is significant. Independent Living philosophy is grounded in consumer control, community living, and systems that respond to the person rather than forcing the person to adapt to inaccessible systems. Federal guidance from the Administration for Community Living also recognizes that Centers for Independent Living and the broader Independent Living network play an important role in improving inclusive emergency preparedness, disaster response, and recovery strategies, and encourages ongoing relationships with emergency management entities before disasters occur.

This resolution is stronger because it centers engagement with the disability community itself. Too often, emergency systems are designed around assumptions about speech, hearing, mobility, cognition, literacy, or technology access. ADA guidance makes clear that state and local governments must ensure emergency management programs are accessible to people with disabilities, including emergency alerts, evacuation and transportation, and emergency shelter programs. That same guidance stresses that communication must be effective for people who are blind, have low vision, are Deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities, and that governments should use multiple accessible communication methods rather than rely on a single mode.

That principle applies directly to 911 and emergency response systems. A cross-disability review should include, at minimum, the experiences of Deaf and hard of hearing callers, blind and low-vision users, people with speech disabilities, people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, people with psychosocial disabilities, people with mobility disabilities, and people who rely on augmentative communication, service animals, durable medical equipment, medications, or personal assistance. The resolution's directive to identify barriers, evaluate existing emergency response technologies, assess privacy and cybersecurity, consider best practices for voluntary and secure information sharing, and develop recommendations to improve accessibility and outcomes is well framed for this purpose.

AILH especially supports the resolution's emphasis on voluntary and secure information sharing. Some people with disabilities may want responders to



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have advance information about communication methods, mobility needs, transfer needs, service animals, equipment, or other access considerations. ADA guidance notes that state and local governments should consider voluntary, confidential registries to help plan evacuation for people with different disabilities, while also recognizing the need for appropriate safeguards. The revised measure properly balances the value of advance information with privacy and cybersecurity concerns by directing the working group to examine those issues explicitly rather than assume a one-size-fits-all solution.

At the same time, AILH urges the committee to view accessibility as broader than a profile system alone. Advance information can help, but it cannot substitute for a fully accessible emergency system. People must still be able to reach 911 through accessible communications pathways; dispatch systems must be able to receive and use disability-related information appropriately; and first responders must be trained to interact in ways that preserve safety, dignity, and autonomy. ADA guidance emphasizes that emergency planning must include both physical and communication access, and that staff and volunteers should be trained to support people with disabilities in integrated settings.

AILH also appreciates that the revised resolution specifically requests inclusion of disability advocacy organizations and individuals with lived experience in the working group. That is essential. Federal Independent Living guidance encourages SILCs and CILs to participate on disaster committees, help identify disability-related issues before and after disasters, and strengthen coordination among emergency management partners. People with lived experience are not a courtesy addition; they are necessary subject-matter experts on barriers that may be invisible to system designers.

For implementation, AILH respectfully recommends that the working group be asked to prioritize four concrete areas. First, review how callers and texters with different disabilities currently access 911 across counties, including any gaps in text, relay, TTY, language access, and alternative communication supports. Second, identify what disability-related



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information, if voluntarily shared, is actually useful to dispatchers and responders, what is time-sensitive, and what should never be collected. Third, develop plain-language privacy standards, consent practices, data retention limits, and correction procedures so individuals can understand and control what information is shared. Fourth, recommend recurring disability-led training and evaluation so improvements are not limited to a one-time report.

AILH further urges the working group to keep its recommendations practical, statewide, and flexible enough to account for county system differences while still establishing clear minimum expectations for accessibility. The revised resolution already points in that direction by asking the 911 Board to either establish a new working group or use an appropriate existing one, and by requiring a report to the Legislature before the 2027 regular session. That structure creates an opportunity to move forward without delaying needed dialogue.

For these reasons, AILH supports SCR62 SD1, and respectfully asks the committee to advance this measure. Effective access to 911 is a life, safety, and civil rights issue, and Hawaii will be better served by a cross-disability, person-centered, privacy-conscious process that includes the people most affected by the system

Mahalo,

Roxanne Bolden

Executive Director

SCR-62

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 8:08:08 PM

Testimony for GVO on 4/2/2026 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Louis Erteschik	Testifying for Hawaii Disability Rights Center	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

We think this is an excellent idea and we really appreciate the Senate’s efforts to find a suitable vehicle as in SCR 62. We were very supportive of HB 1577 and yet acknowledge some of the concerns raised by the 911 Board. At the same time it is very important to engage the disability community so that the Smart 911 device, in whatever form it is developed, takes into account the information that is needed as well as the various scenarios that might be encountered by first responders.

We are confident that the collaboration envisioned here will produce positive results.

SCR-62

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 3:30:15 PM

Testimony for GVO on 4/2/2026 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, Support

62 SCR REQUESTING CERTAIN STATE BUILDINGS DESIGNED ON OR AFTER JULY 1, 2027, AND INTENDED TO SERVE A SECONDARY PURPOSE AS AN EMERGENCY SHELTER TO BE DESIGNED TO WITHSTAND CATEGORY 5 HURRICANES AND BE USED AS SHELTERS IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY.

ESPECIALLY IF DEPARTMENT ADDRESSES HOUSING SUCH AS DHHL

LATE

SCR-62

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 4:46:35 PM

Testimony for GVO on 4/2/2026 3:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaili	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chairs and Members,

My name is Kaili Swan. I am a self-advocate, and I support resolution SCR62 Proposed SD1.

I help work on emergency preparedness for people with disabilities, and I can tell you, this is really important to us.

In an emergency, people like me may may not have the support of their mom to practice being prepared, they may need extra help. Some of us have trouble communicating. Some of us need support to understand what is happening. Some of us have medical or mobility needs.

When first responders don't know this ahead of time, it can be scary, confusing, and sometimes dangerous.

That is why it is so important to have a system where we can share information ahead of time, so responders know how to help us before they arrive.

I'm glad this working group will include people with disabilities. We need to be at the table not on the menu. We do not need things done for us, but with us.

I want to make sure this leads to real change, not just more meetings. I have to work and I don't have time to waste.

The system needs to be easy to use, work with phones and landlines, and include things like our access and functional needs, our caregivers, where we live, and who lives with us that may also need extra support.

When you include us, you make emergency systems work better for everyone.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony in support of SCR62 Proposed SD1
