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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO EMERGENCY SERVICES.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that requiring first  
2 responders to obtain commercial driver's licenses to operate  
3 authorized commercial vehicles is not in the best interest of  
4 public safety, because first responders receive training  
5 provided by federal, state, and county government agencies that  
6 would satisfy this requirement. Imposing this requirement would  
7 only serve to create an administrative hurdle for first  
8 responders and hinder the performance of their vital public  
9 safety functions.

10           The legislature additionally finds that although emergency  
11 medical services personnel, who may be assigned to operate  
12 vehicles that are classified as commercial motor vehicles in the  
13 performance of essential public safety functions, receive the  
14 same levels of rigorous training as others authorized to operate  
15 commercial vehicles, they are still required to obtain  
16 commercial driver's licenses, which slows down hiring, raises



1 costs, and creates administrative hurdles for emergency medical  
2 services departments across the State.

3 The legislature further finds that exempting qualified  
4 emergency medical services personnel from commercial driver's  
5 license requirements may help to alleviate barriers to  
6 recruitment and retention and streamline essential functions,  
7 while maintaining public safety standards.

8 The legislature also finds that the current definition for  
9 "authorized emergency vehicle" in the Hawaii Revised Statutes is  
10 insufficient, in that it does not include alternative emergency  
11 service vehicles utilized by emergency medical services  
12 departments in the State.

13 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to:

- 14 (1) Exempt emergency medical services personnel from  
15 commercial driver's license requirements, similar to  
16 other licensed first responders operating in the  
17 State; and
- 18 (2) Expand the definition of "authorized emergency  
19 vehicle" to replace ambulances with emergency medical  
20 services vehicles, and include disaster response and  
21 recovery vehicles, department of health-approved



1 vehicles, and vehicles designated as emergency  
2 vehicles by the State or an emergency management  
3 agency.

4 SECTION 2. Section 286-235.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
5 amended to read as follows:

6 "**§286-235.5 Persons exempt from licensure.** The following  
7 persons shall be exempt from licensure under this part:

8 (1) Individuals who operate commercial motor vehicles for  
9 military purposes. This exception is limited to  
10 active-duty military personnel, members of the  
11 military reserves, members of the national guard on  
12 active duty, including personnel on full-time national  
13 guard duty, personnel on part-time national guard  
14 training, and national guard military technicians  
15 (civilians who are required to wear military  
16 uniforms), and active-duty United States Coast Guard  
17 personnel. This exception is not applicable to United  
18 States reserve technicians; and

19 (2) Federal, state, and county firefighters, emergency  
20 medical services personnel, and law enforcement  
21 officers who drive federal, state, or county fire



1 trucks, including fire pumpers, aerial ladder trucks,  
2 and elevated platform trucks, or authorized emergency  
3 vehicles; provided that they are trained by the  
4 federal, state, or county government and the  
5 commercial motor vehicles are equipped with audible  
6 and visual signals and are not subject to normal  
7 traffic regulation[-]; provided further that federal,  
8 state, and county government agencies shall maintain  
9 proof that personnel under this paragraph have  
10 successfully completed an agency-approved or other  
11 state-approved training on authorized emergency  
12 vehicles. For purposes of this paragraph, "authorized  
13 emergency vehicle" shall have the same meaning as in  
14 section 291C-1."

15 SECTION 3. Section 291C-1, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
16 amended by amending the definition of "authorized emergency  
17 vehicle" to read as follows:

18 ""Authorized emergency vehicle" includes fire department  
19 vehicles, police vehicles, [~~ambulances,~~] emergency medical  
20 services vehicles, disaster response and recovery vehicles,  
21 ocean safety vehicles, law enforcement vehicles, conservation



1 and resources enforcement vehicles, [~~and~~] office of the state  
2 fire marshal vehicles, and department of health vehicles  
3 authorized and approved pursuant to section 291-31.5 that are  
4 publicly owned, and other publicly or privately owned vehicles  
5 designated as such by the state or a county council[-] or an  
6 emergency management agency."

7 SECTION 4. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed  
8 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

9 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000.



**Report Title:**

City and County of Honolulu Mayor's Package; Commercial Driver's License Exemption; Emergency Medical Services Personnel; Authorized Emergency Vehicles

**Description:**

Exempts emergency medical services personnel from commercial driver's license requirements. Expands the definition of "authorized emergency vehicle" under the State Traffic Code to replace ambulances with emergency medical services vehicles, and include disaster response and recovery vehicles, Department of Health-approved vehicles, and vehicles designated as emergency vehicles by the State or an emergency management agency. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

