



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Health
February 11, 2026 at 9:00 a.m.

By

Lui Hokoana

Interim Vice President for Community Colleges
University of Hawai'i System

HB 2314 – RELATING TO EMERGENCY MEDICAL SYSTEMS OF CARE.

Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i Community Colleges (UHCCs) offers its testimony in support with amendments to HB 2314, which seeks to modernize Hawai'i's emergency medical services (EMS) statutes to better align with current best practices in emergency care, workforce preparation, and system coordination.

Hawai'i's existing EMS statutory framework would benefit from updates that reflect contemporary clinical standards, evolving scopes of practice, and integrated systems-of-care models that are now widely recognized at the national level. Modernized statutes can provide clearer guidance for EMS governance, promote consistency across counties, and support quality assurance and performance improvement across the emergency response continuum.

The UHCCs recognize the importance of statutory alignment between workforce education, credentialing, and real-world clinical practice. Currently, the EMS programs are offered through Kapi'olani Community College. Updating EMS statutes to reflect current best practices supports stronger alignment between educational curricula, certification expectations, and the competencies required of today's EMS professionals. This is particularly important in Hawai'i, where geographic isolation and uneven access to emergency care heighten the need for a well-prepared, adaptable EMS workforce.

At the same time, while UHCCs are supportive of the bill overall, we note that implementation of an Advanced Emergency Medical Technician (AEMT) program and the mandated July 1, 2026, certification deadline for emergency dispatchers would require additional services and resources to meet required accreditation and instructional standards.

Specifically, the AEMT pathway would necessitate approximately 200 additional hours of instruction beyond the current EMT program. Based on the Fall 2026 Step C lecturer rate of \$2,881 per credit hour, the University identifies a direct operational requirement of \$130,000 to launch two (2) training cohorts to meet the immediate statewide demand. This fiscal request is based on the following breakdown per cohort:

- Lead Instructional Labor: \$37,453 (13 Credits/TEs per AEMT block X \$2,881)
- Specialized Lab Assistants: \$7,200 (2 Assistants X 80 Lab Hours @ \$45/hr to maintain 1:6 national safety ratios)
- Administrative Coordination: \$5,000 (Field rotation and hospital clinical oversight)
- Invasive Medical Supplies: \$15,000 (Consumable IV kits, advanced airway heads, and training simulators)
- Total Per Cohort: approximately \$65,000 (Total for 2 cohorts: \$130,000)

These considerations are important to ensure that statutory modernization translates into high-quality, sustainable workforce preparation rather than unfunded mandates on education providers. The University respectfully requests the inclusion of the following appropriation section:

SECTION X. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$130,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 to the University of Hawaii Community Colleges (UOH800) for the purpose of implementing a time-sensitive emergency medical systems of care training model. The sum appropriated shall be used for direct instructional labor and medical training supplies for two (2) Advanced Emergency Medical Technician (AEMT) training cohorts, including costs for lead instruction, specialized lab assistants to maintain 1:6 national accreditation safety ratios, and necessary medical training equipment. The sum appropriated shall be expended by the University of Hawaii for the purposes of this Act.

In addition, modern EMS statutes that emphasize system integration can strengthen coordination between pre-hospital care, hospitals, and community-based services, improving patient outcomes and overall system resilience. Such alignment supports Hawaii's broader public health goals and enhances emergency preparedness across island communities.

HB 2314 represents a meaningful step toward modernizing Hawaii's EMS framework in a manner consistent with national best practices. UHCCs support the intent of the bill and appreciate the Legislature's focus on strengthening EMS systems statewide. As implementation moves forward, we encourage continued collaboration with education and workforce partners to ensure that programmatic expectations are aligned with available resources and accreditation requirements. With the inclusion of the necessary fiscal support to implement these expanded training requirements, UHCCs respectfully support HB 2314.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to testify on this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



STEPHEN F. LOGAN
MAJOR GENERAL
ADJUTANT GENERAL
KA 'AKUKANA KENELALA

JAMES DS. BARROS
ADMINISTRATOR OF
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
KAHU HO'OMALU PŪLIA

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
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STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 2314,
RELATING TO EMERGENCY MEDICAL SYSTEMS OF CARE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
HEALTH

BY

JAMES DS. BARROS
ADMINISTRATOR
HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

February 11, 2026

Aloha Chair Takayama, Vice-Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide **SUPPORT** testimony on House Bill 2314, which aims to update Hawai'i's emergency medical services statutes to reflect contemporary best practices.

House Bill 2314 recognizes the need for seamless integration of emergency medical services with broader emergency management systems.

This measure tackles the challenges posed by today's time-sensitive emergency medical systems and seeks to resolve the coordination, integration, and resource deployment gaps that have become apparent during recent emergencies. During emergency situations, time is an essential factor, and the state must prioritize necessary changes to systems that can ultimately lead to saving lives.

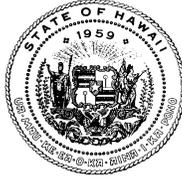
HIEMA endorses proposed amendments in related legislation (HB1752 & SB 2139) that would update the membership of the Hawai'i Emergency Medical Systems Advisory Council by replacing the Adjutant General with the Administrator of HIEMA as an ex-officio member.

This change ensures that emergency medical system policy is aligned with the State's overall emergency management and disaster response framework, facilitating streamlined planning, improved policy formulation, and efficient response coordination during emergencies.

HIEMA is committed to supporting initiatives that enhance resiliency in Hawai'i, provided they do not adversely impact the Governor's Executive budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in SUPPORT of House Bill 2314.

James Barros: james.barros@hawaii.gov; 808-733-4300



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**Testimony in SUPPORT of (HB2314)
RELATING TO EMERGENCY MEDICAL SYSTEMS OF CARE**

REPRESENTATIVE GREGG TAKAYAMA, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Wednesday, February 11, 2026 at 9:00 AM | Room Number: 329

1 **Fiscal Implications:** None

2 **Department Position:** The Department of Health (“Department”) support this measure
3 offering comments and proposed amendments.

4 **Department Testimony:** The State of Hawaii, Department of Health’s Emergency Medical
5 Services & Injury Prevention Systems Branch (EMSIPSB) strongly supports this measure and
6 provides testimony on behalf of the Department to modernize Hawaii Revised Statutes §321-
7 221 through §321-230 and strengthen the State’s emergency medical systems of care.

8 Hawaii’s existing Emergency Medical Services (EMS) statutes were developed decades ago and
9 reflect emergency medical services practices and system structures that largely date back to the
10 late 1980s, when EMS was primarily viewed as a means of transporting patients to the hospital.
11 Since that time, the role of EMS has evolved significantly. Today, EMS is an integrated and
12 essential component of the healthcare and public health system, providing out-of-hospital,
13 community-based care that includes assessment, treatment, stabilization, telehealth-supported
14 services, and coordination of care, in addition to acute medical response and patient transport.
15 This measure is a critical step forward in updating Hawaii’s statutory framework to better

1 reflect present-day emergency medical services practice and the evolving public health role of
2 modern emergency medical systems of care.

3 By modernizing and clarifying key statutory definitions, the bill recognizes the full scope of
4 modern EMS systems and promotes improved coordination across all islands, including both
5 urban and rural communities. These updates will also ensure that the State Department of
6 Health and EMS agencies have the statutory authority and flexibility to integrate state-of-the
7 art technologies and community-based strategies to expand access to care. This includes the
8 use of mobile integrated health, community paramedicine, and telehealth services to better
9 meet local community needs, reduce barriers to care, and strengthen continuity across the
10 emergency and healthcare delivery system.

11 Passage of this measure is essential to Hawaii's ability to access and fully leverage federal
12 funding opportunities, including the Rural Health Care Transformation Program. Outdated
13 statutory language currently creates barriers to eligibility and limits the State's ability to expand
14 rural EMS services and integrated systems of care. By aligning statutory definitions with current
15 practice and national standards, this measure positions Hawaii to meet federal requirements,
16 maximize available matching funds, and make strategic investments in rural EMS capacity,
17 workforce development, data sharing, and coordinated systems of care.

18 These statutory updates will strengthen emergency response capabilities statewide, resulting in
19 improved health outcomes across Hawaii, particularly in rural and underserved communities,
20 while ensuring the responsible and effective use of state and federal resources.

21 Finally, the Department respectfully requests that amendments adopted in HB1752 and its
22 companion bill, SB2139, be incorporated into HB2314 where appropriate to ensure alignment
23 across measures and to avoid duplication or conflicting statutory language. These amendments
24 include a technical update to advisory committee membership, replacing the reference to the
25 Adjutant General with the Administrator of the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency.

1 For these reasons, the Department strongly supports this measure and urges its passage.

2 **Offered Amendments:** (b) The advisory ~~committee~~ council shall be composed of ~~twenty~~
3 twenty-three members: ~~three~~ four nonvoting ex-officio members, who shall be the director of
4 transportation, the ~~adjutant general,~~ administrator of the Hawaii emergency management
5 agency, the executive director of the Hawaii 9-1-1 board, and the administrator of the state
6 health planning and development agency,

7 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

In reply, please refer to:
File: 26-001

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**Testimony in Support of House Bill 2314 (HB2314)
RELATING TO EMERGENCY MEDICAL SYSTEMS OF CARE**

REPRESENTATIVE GREGG TAKAYAMA, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Honorable Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of HB2314.

The existing statutes were developed decades ago. Since then the quality and scope of Emergency Medical Care has improved and expanded. This measure will modernize and accurately define current systems of pre-hospital Emergency Medical Systems and essential communication systems. The measure will allow Hawaii to continue to improve the delivery of out of hospital Emergency Medical Care by implementing communication and assessment tools that were not possible when the statutes were previously adopted.

This measure will also allow access to funding from federal sources, including the Rural Health Care Transformation Program. Utilization of available funding to support delivery of communication tools and assessment of emergency patients in rural EMS locations is possible with the proposed definition updates in this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Ronald M. Kuroda, MD
Oahu County, EMS Medical Director
State of Hawaii, Department of Health



OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 2314
RELATING TO EMERGENCY MEDICAL SYSTEMS OF CARE
Ke Kōmike Hale o ke Olakino
Hawai'i State Capitol

Pepeluali 11, 2026

9:00 AM

Lumi 329

Aloha e Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, a me Members of Ke Kōmike Hale o ke Olakino:

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS HB2314** which modernizes Hawai'i's emergency medical services statutes to establish a comprehensive, integrated, time-sensitive emergency medical systems of care model aligned with national best practices. The Office of Hawaiian Affairs is the constitutionally established body responsible for protecting and promoting the rights and well-being of Native Hawaiians and is charged with assessing and advocating on policies that affect them. In fulfillment of this mandate, OHA supports measures that strengthen access to timely, high-quality, and coordinated health care across all islands.

HB2314 recognizes that modern emergency care depends on integrated, statewide systems that coordinate pre-hospital response, transport, facility-based care, communications, and data systems for time-sensitive conditions such as trauma, stroke, cardiac events, sepsis, and burns. Updating statute to reflect a systems-of-care model will improve coordination, standardization, and accountability across emergency response partners. Reliable and well-coordinated emergency medical systems are especially important for geographically isolated and rural communities, where distance, workforce shortages, and transport constraints can significantly affect outcomes. Strengthening statewide coordination, communications interoperability, air-medical integration, and data-driven quality improvement supports more equitable emergency care access for residents across all islands.

Native Hawaiians experience disproportionate burdens in several time-sensitive health conditions, including cardiac disease and stroke, making rapid, coordinated emergency response particularly critical for beneficiary health outcomes. System modernization that improves response time, triage accuracy, and continuity of care helps reduce preventable death and long-term disability. OHA supports the bill's emphasis on statewide standards, integrated planning, children's emergency services, and advisory council capacity, all of which promote resilience, preparedness, and continuous improvement in emergency medical response. For these reasons, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs respectfully urges this Committee to **PASS HB2314**. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important measure.



**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

KENNETH S. FINK, MD, MGA, MPH
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH
KA LUNA HO'ŌKELE

JOHN C. (JACK) LEWIN, MD
ADMINISTRATOR

February 11, 2026

LATE

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

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

**RE: HB 2314 -- RELATING TO EMERGENCY MEDICAL SYSTEMS OF
CARE**

HEARING: Wednesday, February 11, 2026 @ 09:00 am; Conference Room 329

POSITION: SUPPORT with COMMENTS

Testimony:

SHPDA strongly supports HB 2314 with comments.

This bill is intended to modernize Hawai'i's emergency medical services statutes by updating them to a comprehensive, time-sensitive emergency medical systems of care model that reflects how emergencies are managed today. By aligning with national best practices, this bill supports coordinated, evidence-based care for critical emergencies, standardized statewide protocols, and improved preparedness for disasters and mass-casualty incidents so residents on every island can receive timely, effective emergency care.

This bill will strengthen Hawai'i's ability to save lives in time-sensitive emergencies by modernizing EMS law into an integrated "emergency medical systems of care" framework that connects pre-hospital response, hospitals, trauma and critical care, and disaster response statewide. By aligning with national best practices, the bill supports coordinated, evidence-based care for emergencies like trauma, heart attacks, strokes, sepsis, and burns, which can improve survival and reduce long-term disability. It also expands statewide coordination tools such as standardized protocols, stronger data collection and evaluation (including a trauma registry), improved communications and 9-1-1 dispatch oversight, and better monitoring of air-medical services, which helps ensure residents in rural and neighbor island communities receive timely, consistent emergency care and improving preparedness for disasters and mass casualty incidents.

HB 2314 testimony of SHPDA (2026), continued.

We defer to the Department of Health the costs and implementation details; and we thank EMS program and the members of the Emergency Medical Service Advisory Committee (EMSAC) for their support and advice on these needed statewide system improvements.

In closing, this bill will bring Hawai'i's emergency response framework into alignment with modern best practices and today's real-world needs. By strengthening statewide coordination, communications, and quality improvement across the full emergency medical systems of care, especially for time-sensitive conditions like trauma, stroke, heart attack, sepsis, and burns, this bill will help ensure that residents on every island can access timely, consistent, lifesaving care when minutes matter most.

Thank you for hearing HB 2314

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

■ -- Jack Lewin, MD, Administrator, SHPDA

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



KENNETH S. FINK, MD, MGA, MPH
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In reply, please refer to:
File: 26-007

**Testimony in Support of House Bill 2314 (HB2314)
RELATING TO EMERGENCY MEDICAL SYSTEMS OF CARE**

REPRESENTATIVE GREGG TAKAYAMA, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

February 10, 2026

Honorable Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of HB2314.

I support HB2314 because it brings Hawaii's EMS statutes into alignment with the realities of modern emergency medical care. EMS is no longer limited to transport—it now provides assessment, treatment, stabilization, telehealth-supported services, and community-based care across all islands. This modernization directly supports the Rural Health Transformation Project, and updating the statutory framework ensures EMS providers have the authority and flexibility needed to deliver these services effectively and to strengthen coordination across both rural and urban communities.

This bill also removes outdated barriers that limit Hawaii's ability to expand rural EMS capacity and access federal funding opportunities. By aligning definitions with national standards, HB2314 positions the state to invest strategically in workforce development, data systems, and integrated models of care. For these reasons, I strongly support HB2314 and urge its passage.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Eric Vaughan, MD
Kauai County, EMS Medical Director
State of Hawaii, Department of Health

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF

HB2314 RELATING TO EMERGENCY MEDICAL SYSTEMS OF CARE

House Committee on Health

Hearing Date: Wednesday, February 11, 2026 at 9:00 am
Hawaii State Capitol, room 329 and Videoconference

Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and Members of the House Committee on Health.

My name is Marilyn Matsunaga, and I serve as Chairperson of the Emergency Medical Services Advisory Committee.

I am submitting testimony in **SUPPORT of HB2314** because it makes necessary updates that strengthen how emergency medical services are coordinated and delivered across Hawai'i.

Current statutes contain outdated language and structures that no longer reflect how emergency medical systems operate in practice. This bill modernizes those provisions so statute aligns with today's emergency response environment, where coordination across agencies, disciplines, and settings is essential to timely and effective care.

Clear and current statutory language matters in emergency medical services. It supports consistent expectations, improves coordination, and reduces confusion during situations where delays or misalignment can affect patient outcomes. This bill helps ensure that state law supports how emergency medical systems function throughout Hawaii.

The bill also helps position Hawai'i to move forward as emergency medical systems continue to evolve. Modernizing statutes now provide a stronger foundation for planning, coordination, and responsible use of resources in the future.

For these reasons, I urge you to support and pass this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.