

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
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**Testimony in SUPPORT of (SB2934 SD1 HD1)
RELATING TO AMBULANCES**

REPRESENTATIVE CHRIS TODD, CHAIR
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Thursday, April 2, 2026 at 2:00 PM | Room Number: 308

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.

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

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

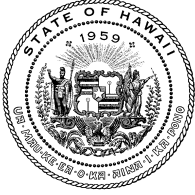
8 The EMSIPSB recognizes that in calendar year 2025, approximately 90 percent of 911 emergent
9 EMS calls across Maui County were responded to in less than 19 minutes. EMSIPSB also
10 monitors quality benchmarks that measure first patient contact time, with a target that 90
11 percent of emergent responses 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 Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony and for your continued commitment to
- 2 strengthening Hawaii's EMS system.



**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
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March 31, 2026

TO: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Representative Chris Todd, Chair
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, 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-SD1-HD1 -- RELATING TO AMBULANCES**

HEARING: Thursday, April 2, 2026 @ 2:00 pm; Conference Room 308

POSITION: SUPPORT with COMMENTS

Testimony:

SHPDA strongly supports SB2934-SD1-HD1, 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-HD1. 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 HD1

RELATING TO AMBULANCES

Ke Kōmike Hale o ka ‘Oihana ‘Imi Kālā

(House Committee on Finance)

Ke Kapitala ‘o Hawai‘i

(Hawai‘i State Capitol)

‘Apelila 2, 2026

2:00 PM

Lumi 308

Aloha e Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS SB2934 SD1 HD1** 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 HD1**. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important measure.

SB-2934-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 11:18:38 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

In strong support. Mahalo!



www.AlohaILHawaii.org

Apr 2, 2026

MISSION

Aloha Independent Living Hawaii (AILH) dedicated to providing independent living programs and services for persons with disabilities in Hawaii.

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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Member

Scott Suzuki
Sheila Castaneda
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The Honorable Chris Todd, Chair
House Committee on Finance
The Thirty-Third Legislature
State Capitol
State of Hawaii
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

SUBJECT: SB2934 SD1 HD1 – Relating to Ambulances

Chair and Members of the Committee:

Aloha Independent Living Hawaii (AILH) respectfully submits this testimony **in support of SB2934 SD1 HD1**. The bill recognizes that timely access to emergency medical services is essential to protecting health and preventing avoidable disability, and that Maui's current ambulance system—nine units distributed across east Maui, Kahului, Wailuku, south Maui, west Maui, and upcountry Maui—must keep pace with rapid population growth in central Maui. For people with disabilities, chronic health conditions, and age-related vulnerabilities, delayed response to a stroke, cardiac event, respiratory crisis, or traumatic injury can mean the difference between returning home and experiencing permanent loss of function or institutionalization.

AILH appreciates that SB2934 SD1 HD1 would appropriate funds from the State's general revenues for the Department of Health to purchase one additional advanced life support ambulance, along with related equipment, to be based in the central Maui area and to fund pay-related personnel costs for one state-certified emergency medical technician and one state-certified paramedic. By explicitly framing the new unit as an advanced life support resource, the Legislature acknowledges the importance of having highly trained personnel and equipment capable of handling complex emergencies, which is especially critical for residents and visitors with significant disabilities, medically fragile conditions, or communication



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barriers who may require more intensive pre-hospital care to stabilize their conditions.

From an Independent Living perspective, equitable EMS coverage is a core community-integration issue. When emergency response times are slower in certain areas, residents with disabilities may feel forced to live closer to hospitals or forego activities in parts of the island they perceive as less safe, which can limit choice and community participation. Placing an advanced life support ambulance in central Maui will not only help reduce death and disability among residents and visitors by improving 911 response times, as recognized in the bill, but can also support confidence that people with disabilities can safely live, work, and recreate in the communities they choose. AILH encourages the Department of Health and its contracted provider to pair this new unit with ongoing training on disability etiquette, communication access (including for Deaf and hard of hearing individuals and people with limited English proficiency), and safe transfer techniques for people with mobility and bariatric needs, so that high-quality emergency care is available to all.

AILH respectfully urges the Legislature to pass SB2934 SD1 HD1 and ensure that funding levels are sufficient not only to purchase the advanced life support ambulance and equipment, but also to recruit and retain qualified EMS personnel to staff the unit consistently. Investing in this capacity in central Maui will help prevent avoidable deaths and long-term disabilities, reduce downstream health care costs, and strengthen the island's emergency-response infrastructure for residents with and without disabilities alike.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,

Roxanne Bolden



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Executive Director

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Hawaii Medical Association

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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Representative Chris Todd, Chair
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

Date: April 2, 2026
From: Hawaii Medical Association (HMA)
Elizabeth Ann Ignacio MD - Chair, HMA Public Policy Committee
Christina Marzo MD and Robert Carlisle MD, Vice Chairs, HMA Public Policy Committee

RE SB 2394 SD1 HD1 RELATING TO AMBULANCES. DOH; Emergency Medical Services; Advanced Life Support Ambulance; Central Maui; Appropriation
Position: Support

This measure would appropriate funds to the Department of Health to purchase one advanced life support ambulance and related equipment to be based in Central Maui and fund pay-related personnel costs for state-certified emergency medical services personnel. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

Timely emergency care is essential to improving survival and health outcomes, particularly in growing communities facing rising call volumes. HMA supports this measure to strengthen emergency medical response capacity in Maui and across Hawaii by expanding advanced life support resources and reinforcing the stability of interisland medical transport. Investing in additional ground ambulance capacity and trained emergency personnel will improve response reliability and help ensure that patients receive rapid, appropriate care when minutes matter most. A coordinated statewide approach will also promote consistent clinical standards, clear oversight, and dependable readiness for disasters and other large-scale emergencies in our state.

HMA appreciates these efforts that prioritize patient access and safety for an essential component of Hawaii's emergency care continuum.

Thank you for allowing the Hawaii Medical Association to testify in support of this measure.

2026 Hawaii Medical Association Public Policy Coordination Team

Elizabeth A Ignacio, MD, Chair • Robert Carlisle, MD, Vice Chair • Christina Marzo, MD, Vice Chair
Linda Rosehill, JD, Government Relations • Marc Alexander, Executive Director

2026 Hawaii Medical Association Officers

Nadine Tenn-Salle, MD, President • Jerald Garcia, MD, President Elect • Elizabeth Ann Ignacio, MD, • Immediate Past President
Laeton Pang, MD, Treasurer • Thomas Kosasa, MD, Secretary • Marc Alexander, Executive Director

REFERENCES AND QUICK LINKS

Brittany Lyte. "Game Changer? Free Medical Flights Start For Some Neighbor Island Residents." *Honolulu Civil Beat*, 20 Jan. 2026.

"Life Flight Network Brings Critical Air Transport Services to Hawai'i Island." *Hawaii News Now*, 11 Nov. 2025.

Wu N. State selects REACH for Maui County's aeromedical transport services. [Honolulu Star Advertiser July 11 2024](#).

Hawaii Department of Health. [DOH issues notice of award for emergency aeromedical ambulance transport service for Maui county](#).

Hawaii Air Ambulance and Medical Escort Costs. <https://airambulance.com/locations-served/hawaii-air-ambulance/> Accessed Feb 1, 2026.

Consillio, K. Charges for Medevac Flights Soar in Hawaii. <https://www.hmpgloballearningnetwork.com/site/emsworld/news/12111684/charges-for-medevac-flights-soar-in-hawaii> Accessed Feb 1, 2026.

Hawaii residents complain of high prices for medevac flights. <https://www.hawaiinewsnow.com/story/29981390/hawaii-residents-complain-of-high-prices-for-medevac-flights/> Accessed Feb 1, 2026.

SB-2934-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 3:23:13 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marcella Alohalani Boido	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, all.

I was born when my father was a physician working at Kula Sanatorium. The first few years of my life were spent in Kula. My parents called me their "Maui Girl." My testimony is therefore personal, and influenced by my family history of producing physicians going back to at least the 1800s. I also have a strong interest in public health.

I have read all of the testimony on this bill. It is exceptionally strong, succinct, and clear on the reasons for supporting and funding this bill.

Please pass and fund this bill, for the sake of the people of Maui.

Thank you.

Marcella Alohalani Boido, M.A.

Moili'ili, Honolulu, Hawaii 96826

SB-2934-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2026 11:35:10 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

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.

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