RES24-272
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 523

PUBLIC SAFETY (PS)

PUBLIC SAFETY (PS) Meeting

Meeting Date: Nov 19, 2024 @ 09:00 AM

Support: 101

Oppose: 2

I wish to comment: 2

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Jeffrey Wilkinson	jwilk21@gmail.com	96734
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 14, 2024 @ 09:35 AM

Testimony:

The integration of HFD and EMS should be explored. Current EMS resources are overwhelmed with call volume and metropolitan units far exceed the national standard for number of calls per hour worked. The 3x larger network of HFD stations could be utilized to distribute the call volume and additional training of HFD personnel would help fill the holes in EMS' staffing shortage. Likewise, cross trained EMS staff would help staff HFD's units if needed. The integration of HFD and EMS only makes sense, particularly when you consider that the majority of HFD's call volume is medical assistance.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Lee Lenchanko	llenchanko@honolulu.gov	96708
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 14, 2024 @ 09:47 AM

Testimony:

It is vitally important that not only do we create a task force or committee to create an effective plan for the merger of HFD and EMS, this committee/task force needs to be filled with personnel or a team who represent the broad spectrum of the employees of these departments. On the EMS side, Administrators, Field personnel, Dispatchers, Field Operation Supervisors and Unit Supervisors.

This committee will not only be the integral part in this merger, they will be the pivotal factor in steps towards better serving the many communities on O'ahu. This merger is not about pride but about creating a service that will provide more emergent care for our whole population and may serve as a model for other Counties.

I have 25 years with the City and County of Honolulu Emergency Medical Services department and have served as a Dispatcher, Field Personnel and now Unit Supervisor. I have seen many changes, some good and some bad, I am hoping this is a step in the direction for a positive change for our department and the community.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kaioluhia Miguel-Hamakua	kjmh90@gmail.com	96789
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 14, 2024 @ 09:48 AM

Testimony:

As a current member of one of the departments involved, i see directly the impact that HFD an EMS provides. I also see, the lengths that our MICTs and EMTs and pushed to in order to provide for the care of our people. With the total number of personnel and apparatus that the HFD has and can provide, i believe exploring the possibilities of a merger are essential to provide the greatest care possible to the island of O'ahu. This will also benefit the memebers of EMS, in reducing the possible # of alarms a given ambulance may have to run. This will reduce fatigue and mental strain, producing a much more conducive working environment to provide the level of care that is required. Everyone wins.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Micah Esteron	micah.esteron@honolulu.gov	96789
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 14, 2024 @ 09:58 AM

Testimony:

Aloha,

911 responses for EMS is growing annually, and will continue to increase in the years to come. With only 21 EMS units that operate to service the island of Oahu, the integration with HFD would create more resources to aid in prehospital care. In support of this proposal, the integration of EMS and HFD would benefit the community.

Mahalo,

Micah Esteron

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Duke Fujii	duke.fujii05@gmail.com	96821
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 14, 2024 @ 10:03 AM

Testimony:

EMS needs new structure. There is not enough staff to fully man daily operations. Little to no communication and support is given to those on the road. A lot of fails promises are made.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Branden Ige	bigemedic@gmail.com	96706
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 14, 2024 @ 10:13 AM

Testimony:

The absence of a commission that choses EMS leaders create top-down problems and challenges that fail to improve the quality of leadership. Although there are years of paramedic seniority and experience in positions of EMS leadership, the lack of management competency stagnates any improvements or progress of our critically vital public services.

EMS workforce deserves longevity and RETENTION. This is only achieved with improved work lives, more manpower, improved retirements, and step-pay increases.

We think HFD structure and leadership provides stability and promise for EMS personnel who are career committed to the profession. We think HFD provides our EMS careers what others could not: RETENTION AND STABILITY.

Name:	Email:	Zip:

Jonathan Detomaso	jdetomas@hawaii.edu	96744
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Nov 14, 2024 @ 11:03 AM

Testimony:

As an employee of emergency medical Services, I fully support the integration and merge of Honolulu fire department and EMS. Due to high call volumes and staff shortages in my department, I feel we can better service our community by integrating both departments and have a better overall work environment and morale boosters for staff to further improve their performance. Also the ability to have step increases With this merger coming from EMS I feel with retain much more staff due to EMS in lack steps.

Name: Ikaika Mollena	Email: ikaikamollena@gmail.com	Zip: 96816
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Nov 14, 2024 @ 11:04 AM

Testimony:

I agree with this proposal, it will benefit both the community as well as the city and state. it would provide better services for our community in regards to prehospital care and emergency medicine and also save money for the city. overall, it'll be a win-win on all sides and makes perfect sense and should've been done years ago overall, it'll be a win-win on all sides and makes perfect sense and should've been done years ago.

Name: Kendell Elento	Email: elento@hawaii.edu	Zip: 96744
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Nov 14, 2024 @ 11:40 AM

Testimony:

Dear whom it may concern,

My name is kendell elento paramedic with the city and county of Honolulu.
I am in support of a merger for various reasons. One of the reason is the streamline of resources to help and protect the community. A task force to investigate what could be utilized in a fashion to streamline resources would be idea to ensure public safety.

-Kendell Elento

Name: Leonard Chong	Email: leonardchong808@gmail.com	Zip: 96706
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Nov 14, 2024 @ 11:48 AM

Testimony:

Being a paramedic with Honolulu EMS, I strongly believe it would benefit overall public, and both departments for a merger/integration of EMS and HFD. HFD has nearly double the amount of units as EMS. If EMS was with every station of HFD patients would have a lesser wait time to be seen and treated potentially saving numerous lives. HFD wouldn't have to wait for an EMS unit to arrive to release them from scene if not needed and EMS staff would have a lesser burn out rate thus maintaining more staff and potentially less sick calls out.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Auggie Ray Alvarez	auggierayalvarez@gmail.com	96819
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 14, 2024 @ 12:06 PM

Testimony:

I have been employed with Honolulu EMS for 6 years. I support the formation of this task force in the hopes to have a successful HFD-EMS merger.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Andrew Dunn	aa321360@gnail.com	96789
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 14, 2024 @ 12:09 PM

Testimony:

As EMS staff, I believe a merge with HFD would be hugely beneficial to all parties. It would immediately help increase the potential amount of ambulances on the island. This helps all aspects of EMS. Call volume, response time, and burnout would all be greatly decreased.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Joseph Cruz	joseph.ginapp@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 14, 2024 @ 12:21 PM

Testimony:

I fully support the creation of a task force to explore the integration of EMS to HFD. As we saw with all the testimonies and information brought to light with Ocean Safety being stood up on its own as a Department there is a national standard of having a commission based system, and always room for improvement. The current operational structure of EMS could be made better. Its the responsibility of these departments to be the best they can be to serve the public. Emergency services serve the public in its most basic and dire need in saving their lives. A task force will only serve to honor that responsibility by reporting back on how best EMS can improve. Don't stop short with just Ocean Safety, EMS is a much larger Department and needs that quality control and assurance to the public that it is being run to its highest potential. Looking into it is the least we can do.

Name:	Email:	Zip:

gabriel majors	majorsgabriel684@gmail.com	96789
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Nov 14, 2024 @ 12:22 PM

Testimony:

I support the making of a task force for the possibility of a merger between HFD and HEMS. I believe that this would help with our issues of job retention and staffing shortages and help our community. With the merger there would be the possibility of steps within our department which we do not have now and HFD does. I believe this would help with job retention because there would be the opportunity for more growth and possibility of promotion within the department. Also I believe putting the two departments together would help with staffing issues because we would have both departments work forces together and I think more people would stay or join knowing we are merged. With that I believe it would help the community more because we would have more employees and the greater possibility of keeping units open instead of closing them and that would help the community with response times and coverage of our areas, instead of relying on outside organizations or other ambulance units having yo relocate and move around.

Name: Theresa Mcgregor	Email: theresamcgregor@hotmail.com	Zip: 96792
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Nov 14, 2024 @ 12:25 PM

Testimony:

I strongly support establishing this task force. An EMS / HFD merger will benefit the community and agencies involved.

Name: PJ Matsuura	Email: pj.matsuura@gmail.com	Zip: 96720
Representing: EMS/HFD	Position: Support	Submitted: Nov 14, 2024 @ 12:34 PM

Testimony:

Honolulu EMS should merge with Honolulu HFD

Name: Lee Vierra	Email: lvierrahi808@gmail.com	Zip: 96734
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Nov 14, 2024 @ 12:41 PM

Testimony:

In regards to creating a task force to look into integration of HEMS into HFD, I am for this.

I am a paramedic and integration would allow for better care of patients and more importantly a better work environment for the already over worked/under staffed/under paid paramedics and EMT's of the HEMS department.

HFD is often the first on scene and if they have a paramedic on board their response/ladder/hose trucks that could perform ALS interventions PTA of an EMS transport unit, then transport times of patients would definitely improve.
HFD has the manpower and the funding to improve HEMS. Having manpower would ensure less or even no unit closures and the more units on the road for HEMS means that the call volume per unit would be more spread out. Having the call volume spread out would lead to less burn out of HEMS workers. HFD is able to get funding for much needed equipment that HEMS needs to better care for and to continue to care for the people of Oahu. HEMS might not have so many broken ambulances and supplies would be more readily available.
With the integration of HEMS into HFD, I would like to see that HEMS gets pay steps that increases pay for HEMS personnel that stay within the department. If pay is increased and with the increase of manpwer there would be less OT work by employees.
I'm sure there is much more to consider and the task force will be great at thoroughly figuring out the best outcome in the best interest of the Oahu population.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Ryan Kalua	austral-cadenza0a@icloud.com	96789
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
City County Honolulu ESD	Support	Nov 14, 2024 @ 12:59 PM

Testimony:
I believe it would be a good idea to explore a merger between the two agencies, EMS and HFD.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Corey Apo	capo1@honolulu.gov	96734
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 14, 2024 @ 01:17 PM

Testimony:
Provides for better service for residents.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Daniel Pomerantz	pomerantzlucas@yahoo.com	96734
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 14, 2024 @ 01:21 PM

Testimony:
As a full time Honolulu city and county paramedic I support merger with HFD with the hope that it would bring additional support and resources to our department. In the 12 years that I have worked for the city we have had increased 911 calls with a shrinking workforce and stagnating pay and benefits. My hope is that merger with HFD would allow the city to open additional ambulances and give us the opportunity to join HFFA eventually. UPW and our current administration are doing nothing significant to increase pay and benefits to support a living wage and retirement and have lost all confidence of the workers on the road. We routinely lose workers to HFD and the federal fire department due to better work environment,

benefits and retirement. Thank you.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Justin Kersting	jkbronxbomber15@gmail.com	87111
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 14, 2024 @ 01:33 PM

Testimony:

I think it is imperative not only for the people of Hawaii , but for the providers in Hawaii that they form a task force to give them the opportunity to be a part of Hawaii fire department. I think that this would be a complete asset not only would it increase the amount of firefighters for the community and the state of Hawaii, but it would enable to provide for a better future for the providers care and the continuity of care that they are providing to the public. I think that this would help provide better wages and opportunity to the people in Hawaii and better hours so they have more time to spend with their families and rest in between work shift. if you look at most apartments across the country, most fire and EMS is integrated into one so I think said Hawaii is a little bit behind the times when it comes to fire and EMS being a one full service and once again, I think it is an injustice to the people of Hawaii that this is not taken place prior to this predicament. I think with the past issue the city and county has faced with ambulances catching fire, injuries to providers and patients This again would be a huge asset to the state of Hawaii. I believe this would give the state of Hawaii and constituents a bigger budget to work with and ultimately eliminate the use of ambulances and vehicles that should be outdated and the serious need for updated equipment and vehicles. it is my belief that the city and county does not have a budget big enough to support what they need to continue as an ambulance company, and it would be a huge benefit to the community the state of Hawaii and every patient that comes in contact for the county of Hawaii's EMS department to be absorbed into Honolulu fire department like I said once again, creating a larger budget to help provide with higher quality of equipment to ensure that they're getting the highest level of care possible. I think it is way overdue and the people of Hawaii deserve this. I think that the fires in Lahaina had Hawaii had more resources more firefighters readily available that they could've eliminated some of the damage and the deaths that occurred and I believe this is one of many many reasons that , the people of Hawaii deserve to have the EMS and turn into more firemen for the city and county in the state of Hawaii.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Macayla Dietrich	dietrichmacayla@yahoo.com	96814
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 14, 2024 @ 03:05 PM

Testimony:

As a EMT with the City and County of Honolulu for the last almost 5 years, I fully support the formation of a Task Force for the integration of HFD and EMS so that the community can be better served by their first responders. A merger between the two departments will benefit all.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Jessi Locke	jessilocke13@gmail.com	91387

Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 14, 2024 @ 03:31 PM

Testimony:

As a former firefighter with the Honolulu Fire Department, I strongly urge you to form a Task Force to ensure the integration between HFD and EMS will be done right. I fully support this merger and feel both the community and personnel from both agencies will benefit tremendously.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kainoa Lopes	kainoa.lopes@gmail.com	96825
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 14, 2024 @ 03:43 PM

Testimony:

I strongly in support of creating a task force to look into this matter.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kaiulani Bowers	oceanbeandip@yahoo.com	96744
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 14, 2024 @ 03:45 PM

Testimony:

I support this

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Natalie Nakamura	natalienakamura@hotmail.com	96814
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 14, 2024 @ 04:06 PM

Testimony:

I fully support the creation of a task force between Honolulu fire department and emergency medical services.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Keavy Brennan	keavybean@aol.com	96741
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 14, 2024 @ 04:26 PM

Testimony:

Combine them

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Christian Perkins	cmkperkins@gmail.com	96789
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:

Self	Support	Nov 14, 2024 @ 04:46 PM

Testimony:

Testimony in Favor of the Creation of a Task Force to Explore the Integration of Honolulu Emergency Medical Services with the Honolulu Fire Department

To whom it may concern,

My name is Christian Perkins and I am a paramedic serving the Honolulu community out of the Salt Lake Ambulance. I write this in order to express my strong support for the creation of a task force dedicated to exploring the potential integration or merger of the Honolulu Emergency Medical Services (EMS) with the Honolulu Fire Department (HFD). This initiative is not just a matter of administrative efficiency; it is a critical step toward enhancing the quality of emergency services provided to our community.

As a paramedic, I have witnessed firsthand the challenges our emergency services face. In recent years, unit closures have occurred primarily due to staffing and personnel retention issues. These closures have led to increased response times, which can mean the difference between life and death in emergency situations. Just last week it took us 30 minutes to respond to a 2-year old near-drowning victim. Our workforce is stretched thin, with many dedicated professionals feeling overburdened and under-appreciated. The demands of the job, combined with inadequate compensation and benefits, have contributed to low morale and high turnover rates among our first responders.

Moreover, the rising call volume has placed unprecedented pressure on our personnel and system. As our population grows and the complexity of emergencies evolves, we must adapt our response strategies to ensure that we can meet the needs of our community effectively. The integration of EMS and HFD could streamline operations, allowing for a more coordinated and efficient response to emergencies. By combining resources, training, and personnel, we can create a larger unified emergency response team that enhances both response times and service delivery.

A merger would not only address operational inefficiencies but also bolster the morale of our first responders. By fostering a collaborative environment that recognizes the invaluable contributions of both paramedics and firefighters, we can create a workplace culture that values teamwork and mutual support. Improved morale among our first responders will lead to better service for the community, as motivated and engaged personnel are more likely to perform at their best.

Furthermore, this integration could lead to significant cost savings. By consolidating administrative functions and eliminating redundancies, the city could allocate resources more effectively, ensuring that funds are available for critical equipment, training, and personnel needs. This strategic realignment would ultimately benefit not just those who serve on the front lines but also the entire community that relies on their expertise and dedication.

In conclusion, the integration of Honolulu Emergency Medical Services with the Honolulu Fire Department presents an

opportunity for transformative change that will benefit our first responders and the community at large. By establishing a task force to explore this merger, we can address the pressing issues of staffing, morale, and response efficiency, ensuring that our emergency services are equipped to meet the challenges of the future.

Let us work together to create a safer, more responsive Honolulu for all its residents.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Christian Perkins
Paramedic, Honolulu Emergency Medical Services

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Andrew Trejo	pinchetrejo@gmail.com	96826
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 14, 2024 @ 04:49 PM

Testimony:
This needs to be done for the safety of Oahu. Honolulu EMS is failing in their care of the public.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Richard Bevacqua	richbev125@gmail.com	96797
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 14, 2024 @ 05:21 PM

Testimony:
I support this measure as currently Honolulu EMS is facing staffing shortages, moral issues, equipment and facility issues, etc. All these issues can be resolved if Honolulu EMS merged with the Honolulu Fire Department. Currently on a good day, there are only 21 ambulances to service the entire island. We face multiple ambulance closures daily due to staffing issues which in turn put the community at risk. With HFD's organization, Honolulu EMS can be better managed.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Rachel Fujikawa	rachel.fujikawa@honolulu.gov	96821
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 14, 2024 @ 05:50 PM

Testimony:
I have been in the EMS department for just under 5 years now, and I have been a paramedic for about 2. Although I am very new, the physicality and mentality of this job are already weighing heavily on me. With every ambulance closure, we take more calls out of our area, lengthening response and transport times and causing the community that we are

assigned to cover to be without an ambulance. We seem to be spread too thin, while also trying to maintain the high standard of care that we have for ourselves. Given the increasing call volume and increasing stresses that the EMS personnel and subsequently HFD personnel face, I believe that the exploration of a potential integration of EMS and HFD should be pursued.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Shaun Takeshita	stakeshita808@gmail.com	96825
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 14, 2024 @ 07:54 PM

Testimony:

Paramedic for 18 years. I am in full support of creating a task force to look into the merger of EMS and HFD to create the best possible service for the community. As of now EMS struggles immensely to retain veteran employees as well as keep newly hired employees. Due to the consistent lack of manpower, the current workforce is asked to work at over 90% utilization that quickly leads to burnout. From this overall quality of life for EMS employees is poor leading to mental health issues and struggles with family life.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Alexander Berardo	aberardo1@gmail.com	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 14, 2024 @ 10:25 PM

Testimony:

As a previous C&C MICT and current HFD firefighter, I support merging EMS and HFD to alleviate the staffing shortage experienced by EMS

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Leighton Takara	takaral8@yahoo.com	96706
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 15, 2024 @ 10:10 AM

Testimony:

I, Leighton Takara hereby support agenda RES24-272. I have been an employee for The City and County of Honolulu EMS for 10 years. Firstly starting my career as an EMT then furthering my education and certifications to a paramedic. Ever since I started my EMS career and decades before that time, EMS has always had staffing shortages/issues and a horrible record of retaining long term employees. Quite frankly, EMTs and paramedics are burnt out from work which many either quit or just pursue a different career. With every year passing, 911 calls are evermore increasing. As Oahu's population and economy grows, so does its demand for 911 services. I love serving my community and being a paramedic, but working EMS with its high call volume is very taxing on the mind and body. I feel as if all my energy gets put into work, and when I come home I am super drained and fatigued which takes away from my personal life. I used to be a fairly active person, enjoying working out 3-5 times/week. Nowadays, I workout once or twice in a month.

City and County of Honolulu first responders that got hired after 2012 have a different retirement than the ones before that time. 30 years base pay, minimum age is 55, and highest 5 years. EMS only receives 1.75% of retirement compared to HPD and HFD receiving 2.25% of their retirement. EMS does not have steps in pay also. UPW 10 states, “equal work equal pay”.

I am for the HFD/EMS merger because EMS needs help and we’ve needed help a long time ago. Combining the 2 departments will only better service the community and employees will have a better balance of work life.

Mahalo,
Leighton Takara

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Christopher Kelly	ckelly2@hawaii.edu	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 15, 2024 @ 11:06 AM

Testimony:
I support this agenda.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Korey Chock	koreyc808@gmail.com	96701
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 15, 2024 @ 11:16 AM

Testimony:
I support a task force looking into the feasibility of combining services of the Honolulu Fire Department and Honolulu Emergency Services Deparment, EMS Division.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Chris Sloman	crsloman@gmail.com	96818
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 15, 2024 @ 11:42 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Natasha Hee	natasha.hee@gmail.com	96797
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 15, 2024 @ 01:03 PM

Testimony:
I support the creation of a task force to ensure a merger between hfd and EMS is done effectively.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Dwight Fujimoto	dwightf@hwaii.edu	96766
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 15, 2024 @ 01:20 PM

Testimony:

I believe that the task force should be created to explore the benefits of merging EMS with HFD

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Brian Hokama	brian.hokama@yahoo.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 15, 2024 @ 01:26 PM

Testimony:

As a law enforcing officer, I support creating a task force.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Courtney Shook	makamaeshook@gmail.com	96734
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 15, 2024 @ 01:40 PM

Testimony:

As a EMT with the City and County of Honolulu for the last 3 years, I fully support the formation of a Task Force for the integration of HFD and EMS so that the community can be better served by their first responders. A merger between the two departments will benefit all.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Reece Fujikawa	reece.fujikawa@gmail.com	96821
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 15, 2024 @ 02:11 PM

Testimony:

I am a paramedic with the city and county of Honolulu EMS. I believe the task force would greatly benefit us.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Aaron O	aarontoshiro@mac.com	96706
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 15, 2024 @ 02:12 PM

Testimony:

I am for looking into the feasibility of combing the Honolulu Fire Department and the Honolulu Emergency Services Department. Any way to improve operational efficiency while still providing quality service is a great idea. This task force has the potential to bolster two life saving entities and make Honolulu a safer place.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Andy Kumamoto	akumamoto@honolulu.gov	96825-4107
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 15, 2024 @ 02:20 PM

Testimony:

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to express my strong support for the creation of a task force to investigate the potential merger between Honolulu Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and the Honolulu Fire Department. I believe that such an initiative could lead to greater operational efficiency, improved emergency response times, and enhanced resource coordination across both agencies.

A merger could streamline operations, eliminate redundancies, and foster a more collaborative approach to managing emergencies. With both departments already playing critical roles in public safety, their combined efforts could result in a more cohesive and responsive system that ultimately benefits the community.

Furthermore, the task force would be instrumental in identifying any potential challenges and ensuring that any changes are made with careful consideration of the public's best interests. By thoroughly examining the logistics, costs, and benefits of such a merger, we can ensure that we are making the most informed and responsible decisions for Honolulu's emergency services.

I urge you to support this important step toward improving our city's emergency response capabilities.

Sincerely,

Andy Kumamoto

City and County of Honolulu EMS

Paramedic

22 years of service

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Dennis Nardo	nardodennis@yahoo.com	96720
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 15, 2024 @ 05:06 PM

Testimony:

To whom it may concern,

City and County EMS and HFD should operate as a single resource to maximize and maintain appropriate staffing levels on

the island of Oahu. Providing a service to the community is a team effort and this will only become stronger as these two agencies unite. Serving as a Fire Captain in the Federal Fire Department this Union and interagency cooperation will only benefit the locals and the tourism community. I humbly pledge my support!

Dennis Nardo

Station Captain

808-375-9549

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Mark Mochida	mochida1800@yahoo.com	96720
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 15, 2024 @ 05:22 PM

Testimony:

I would like to support the City Administration to establish a task force to explore the intergration of the Emergency Medical Services program in to the Honolulu Fire Department. I feel very strongly about this issue due to the fact that I have worked for EMS and currently a fire department that also is integrated. There are many benefits of having an integrated department one of them being is safe staffing levels. Having an integrated department also benefits the community with quicker responses of higher trained personnel. The list goes on and on. I am very hopeful that the task force will be created and discover all of the benefits of having an integrated department. Thank you for your time

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Waipa Parker	waipaparker@yahoo.com	96821
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 15, 2024 @ 05:30 PM

Testimony:

I support the establishment of a task force to explore the integration of the Emergency Medical Services program into the Honolulu Fire Department.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Adam Ogden	cheukin30@hotmail.com	96821
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
City EMS	Support	Nov 15, 2024 @ 05:35 PM

Testimony:

My name is Adam Ogden. I’ve been a paramedic for over 25 years. I’m writing to express my support for a task force to look into the integration of Fire/EMS

Over the past 25 years I have seen many changes within our Department. Over the past few years however I’ve observed

changes that in my opinion I do not see favorable to the paramedics, EMTs and to our community

City EMS has only 21 or 22 ambulance units. These units provide prehospital emergency services to a population of around 1 million. This does not include our visitors or our military. On any given day our Dept will close or shut down on average anywhere from 1-5 units. These unit closures delay emergency services by increasing wait times, sometimes delaying vital emergency care. Despite what is being told. These wait times DO affect patient care and outcomes. Some will say that according to the " stats", the response times on "average" are 17 mins and this is with both unit closures and when all units are fully staffed

This is not entirely true. I can provide instances when response times are in excess of 40 mins. How can these response times not affect patient care?

We are also facing a retention issue

Our dept has a problem with retaining both paramedics and EMTs. Most of our personnel leave our department for Fire departments. We are losing paramedics and EMTs to Hawaii county Fire, HFD, Federal Fire Dept, State Crash and even mainland Fire departments. Some are leaving for other professions like nursing or PA school

They are all leaving because of better work life balance, better leadership, better retirement, less workload, more career and promotional opportunity, better pay and union representation

Retention has never been at the top of the list for our leadership and up until only very very recently have they begun to admit it after years of saying that we do not have a retention problem. We have a recruitment problem

These are a few of the issues we are facing. I truly believe that should a task force be approved to look into a merger between EMS and HFD, it will highlight the current deficiencies within the current system and expedite the merge.

A merger would not only benefit both EMS and HFD. But most of all it will benefit our community.

Thank you

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kaipo Hayashida	kaipohaya88@gmail.com	96706
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 15, 2024 @ 06:00 PM

Testimony:

Aloha,

My name is Kaipo Hayashida and I'm a former Paramedic of the City and County Emergency Medical Services of Honolulu.

I served 11 years with the department, and proudly provided life saving medical treatment and transport, held to the highest standards across the nation. This department has provided me life changing experiences and opportunities that have made me the humble and grateful man I am today. I support the department's efforts to integrate with the Honolulu Fire Department. Both departments work alongside each other everyday servicing our communities. This integration will build on the quick response and quality medical service that the community deserves. Thank you for allowing me to share my gratitude and words of support for a department that deserves to be acknowledged for their service.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Danh Richardson	drichardson7@hawaii.rr.com	96732-4509
Representing:	**Position:**	**Submitted:**
Self	Support	Nov 15, 2024 @ 06:17 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Kakou, I am a current paramedic on Maui County , but I worked with the C&C on Honolulu for 4.5 yrs starting in 1998. I fully support EMS and HFD joining forces to create a system that would greatly improve response times for people getting help. When I was there, stations would close down only during big holidays like Christmas and new years. Now I hear that 1-5 stations are shutting down daily. That's out of 21 or 22 ambulance stations. And avg of 3 rigs which is nearly 14%. This causes a huge strain on an already busy system. This causes burnout in the workers, they eventually leave to seek a better work environment. This then leads to even less workers to cover the shifts. It's a vicious cycle that gets worse and worse.

EMS works very closely with HFD and it would only make sense to join the two.

On Maui County we have 11 ambulance, 1 x backup unit, and 1 solo response unit for 160,000 people.

Honolulu has 22 units for 1.2 million people. Do you see the discrepancy?

Now if there is an ambulance at every fire station in Honolulu, that would increase the EMS rigs to 42. That's nearly doubling the fleet. People wouldn't be burned out and many of them would stay home to serve their own communities.

I've thought about coming back to Oahu since my whole family is there, but the thought of working for the C&C in this day and age scares me. I would not survive.

I strongly urge you to look into joining forces between EMS and Fire to serve the community better. If nothing changes, I can guarantee it will get much worse. I don't want to imagine a worse situation than the current. There will be more closed units everyday. Response times will be horrendous. One day it'll be your family member that had to wait too long and have a fully treatable condition be 10 minutes too late. Now is the time to make changes. It's not too late. Do what's right. Stand up for the people. Stand up for your friends, your family, and your loved ones.

I thank you for your time and attention. Much Aloha to you all.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Allen Zhang	canhuangzhang@gmail.com	96706
Representing:	**Position:**	**Submitted:**
Self	Support	Nov 15, 2024 @ 07:51 PM

Testimony:

I am in support of this bill to merge Honolulu EMS with Honolulu Fire Department. I believe this movement will not only benefit both departments but the entire island of Oahu. Combining resources together will greatly impact coverage areas and responses time.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Andrew Eiman	andrew.eiman@yahoo.com	96744
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 15, 2024 @ 08:49 PM

Testimony:

I strongly support the formation of a task force to ensure the EMS/HFD integration will be done correctly and efficiently for all parties involved

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Nicole Stange	stangenicolee@gmail.com	96819
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 15, 2024 @ 08:57 PM

Testimony:

Both organizations have specialized and became excellent in their specific areas and could only benefit from being multifaceted. Resources as far as personnel would increase which would benefit all parties and the community.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kameron Aceret	kameronaceret@hotmail.com	96797
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 16, 2024 @ 08:58 AM

Testimony:

Aloha,

My name is Kameron Aceret, former City and County of Honolulu EMS Unit Supervisor. I am writing in full support of the integration of the Emergency Medical Services program into the Honolulu Fire Department for the betterment of its personnel and the community. I began my journey in this field over 12 years ago with Honolulu EMS, first as an EMT, then as a paramedic, and lastly, as a Unit Supervisor before departing. Having worked for Honolulu EMS was an unforgettable experience that afforded me many valuable opportunities to learn and grow, and I am very grateful to have been part of this organization. Although it was a learning experience, rapidly increasing 911 calls have taken their toll on personnel, which also has effects on the community. In 2023, Honolulu EMS responded to over approximately 110,000 911 calls with just 21 ambulance crews to cover the island. On any given day, an HFD platoon has approximately 332 firefighters on duty, many of whom are EMTs and several paramedics. It may not be easy, but integrating these resources together would not only benefit personnel but also the surrounding communities as a whole. Throughout the years responding to

emergencies, we (EMS) worked alongside our HFD family on numerous incidents to ensure that the patient had the necessary resources for the best outcome. I am a living example of how the efficient teamwork of EMS and HFD spared my life. Without them, I wouldn't be here today. According to one core value of HFD, it is said, "'a'ohe hana nui ke alu 'ia," no task is too great when done together by all. Teamwork promotes excellence. I hope our voices are considered and are able to progress forward on this important matter. Mahalo for your time and attention.

Respectfully,
Kameron Aceret
Firefighter Paramedic

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Austin Kino	imuakino1@gmail.com	96821
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 16, 2024 @ 03:22 PM

Testimony:
I support the establishment of a task force to explore the integration of Emergency Medical Services into the Honolulu Fire Department.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
John Hookano	johnhookano@gmail.com	96706
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 16, 2024 @ 05:52 PM

Testimony:
I am in full support of the establishment of a task force that will earnestly explore the integration of Honolulu Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and the Honolulu Fire Department (HFD). Being with HFD over 13 years now, I have worked hand-in-hand with EMS on a daily shift basis. It is through my interactions with EMS personnel that I believe something must be done.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Konner Sato	808konner@gmail.com	96825
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 16, 2024 @ 06:22 PM

Testimony:
My name is Konner Sato and I am in support of the creation of a Task Force to look at the possible integration of the Honolulu Fire Department, HFD, and Emergency Medical Services, EMS.

Growing up with a cousin in EMS I have seen and heard of the numerous challenges faced every day by our paramedics including but not limited to staffing shortages, unit closures, increased response times, and the increasing volume of 911

calls.

The Honolulu Fire Department has 43 strategically located stations around Oahu compared to 21 EMS ambulance units. Honolulu Fire and EMS work closely together every single day caring for those who are sick and injured in our community. I feel it is a sensible act to create this task force to look at the possible merger of EMS and HFD to better the safety and service of the island.

Every year the call volume for medical emergencies in Honolulu increases, however, the resources of EMS stay the same. With only 21 ambulances, it will soon be a struggle for residents and visitors to receive the care that they need in a timely fashion. In medical emergencies, time is a big factor in whether someone lives or dies.

The study and hopeful creation of a fire-based EMS system will bring great benefits to not only the effectiveness of our 911 system but it will bring benefits to the community as well. A fire-based EMS system brings a centralized dispatch network getting a fire suppression apparatus or ambulance dispatched and en route to the call faster. A fire-based EMS system creates more opportunities for career advancement in both HFD and EMS as more promotional and pay steps will be available for members of the department to take advantage of. Lastly, the integration of a fire-based EMS system will bring high-quality medical and fire service to the residents and visitors of Honolulu faster. With a combined force of firefighters and paramedics; care, treatment, and transport will be greatly enhanced.

I am in strong support of the creation of this task force to study the integration of HFD and EMS. The residents and visitors expect nothing but the best and most timely care in their time of need and supporting this task force is the best way we can give people the best care possible.

Thank you all for your time and consideration.

Konner S. Sato

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Edward Fujioka	puunui@msn.com	96818
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 16, 2024 @ 07:49 PM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Trevor Fujisaka	trevorfujisaka13@gmail.com	96797
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 16, 2024 @ 09:57 PM

Testimony:

I think this idea should be explored and talked about. It's about time we look at different opportunities.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Ryan Umeno	rsumeno@yahoo.com	96825
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 17, 2024 @ 12:41 AM

Testimony:

As a paramedic for 22 years for the City and County of Honolulu I have seen no plans to provide retention among our personnel. This augments the ongoing major issues; high turnover rate, staffing shortages, daily unit closures, burnout, poor morale and safety issues. When combined with a growing population and increasing call volume, our system could potentially be compromised.

Our department remains stagnated with no rectification. I am in agreement with moving forward and forming a task force/ HFD merger. HFD can provide a stable, structured system which not only benefits employees and retention but overall patient care.

Sincerely,

Ryan Umeno
Paramedic C&C Honolulu EMS

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Jaren Luke	lukejaren@gmail.com	96789
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 17, 2024 @ 11:04 AM

Testimony:

I am a firefighter in the Honolulu Fire Department and I support this.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Keali'i Ofsthun	ofsthun.kealii@gmail.com	96826
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 17, 2024 @ 12:50 PM

Testimony:

As an EMT with the City and County of Honolulu for the last 2 years, I fully support the formation of a Task Force for the integration of HFD and EMS so that the community can be better served by their first responders. A merger between the two departments will benefit all.

Name:	Email:	Zip:

Kanani Adams	kaadam07@yahoo.com	96816
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Nov 17, 2024 @ 01:24 PM

Testimony:

I strongly support RES24-272

REQUESTING THE CITY ADMINISTRATION TO ESTABLISH A TASK FORCE TO EXPLORE THE INTEGRATION OF THE EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES PROGRAM INTO THE HONOLULU FIRE DEPARTMENT.

Creating this task force would be the first step in creating safer communities for all of Oahu.

Name: Alexander Laboda-Lyman	Email: laboda@hawaii.edu	Zip: 96816
Representing: HESD	Position: Support	Submitted: Nov 17, 2024 @ 01:35 PM

Testimony:

Due to multiple unit closures nightly and daily, I'm requesting City and County look into a HFD/EMS merger to better serve the public.

Name: Brandon Wolff	Email: admin@hldsf.com	Zip: 96821
Representing: ILWU - Hawaii	Position: Support	Submitted: Nov 17, 2024 @ 01:43 PM

Name: Kina Palaualelo	Email: kina_napua@yahoo.com	Zip: 96793
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Nov 17, 2024 @ 02:58 PM

Testimony:

I support

Name: Keegan Loo	Email: keegankcloo@gmail.com	Zip: 96817
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Nov 17, 2024 @ 04:54 PM

Testimony:

I SUPPORT THE CITY ADMINISTRATION TO ESTABLISH A TASK FORCE TO EXPLORE THE INTEGRATION OF THE EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES PROGRAM INTO THE HONOLULU FIRE DEPARTMENT. I BELIEVE THE INTEGRATION WOULD INCREASE POSITIVE PATIENT OUTCOMES AND THEREFORE GREATLY BENEFIT THE COMMUNITY.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Evan Yamagishi	evaneezer49@hotmail.com	80924
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 17, 2024 @ 05:21 PM

Testimony:

I support the establishment of a Task Force to explore the integration of the Emergency Medical Services Department and the Honolulu Fire Department.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Keegan Dunn	kawailoakid@gmail.com	96712
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 17, 2024 @ 06:21 PM

Testimony:

in support of creating a task force regarding the integration of HFD and EMS.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Marlon Cezar	mcezar@hawaii.edu	96789
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 17, 2024 @ 07:06 PM

Testimony:

This is a step in the right direction for public safety.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
AJ Ortaleza	ortaleza.aj@gmail.com	96706
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 17, 2024 @ 07:10 PM

Testimony:

As a paramedic with the city and county, I support a task force aimed towards the integration of EMS and HFD. I feel a merger would benefit both departments as well as the community. Adequate staffing and step pay increases are just two examples of how a merger would improve things for EMS.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
R. Young	raceson@yahoo.com	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Oppose	Nov 17, 2024 @ 07:27 PM

Testimony:

Strongly object. Other than strengthening EMS' collective bargaining position, there is no benefit. There will be no benefit to the ultimate mission of both Departments: service to the community.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Daniel DeAnda	deandadaniel9@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 17, 2024 @ 08:21 PM

Testimony:

I support the transparency that the task force would provide for EMS. Transparency is important to maintain public trust and integrity.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Richard Mendonca	crashems@hotmail.com	96817
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	I wish to comment	Nov 17, 2024 @ 08:22 PM

Testimony:

I am a retired paramedic. Worked for C&C EMS for 25 years. I have a different perspective than most. Is establishing a, “Task Force,” to examine the integration of EMS and HFD a good idea? Perhaps. However, if you’re going to do this, make sure the, “Task Force,” looks at every possible solution before trying to integrate the 2 agencies. This was tried back in the 90’s. The problems that were brought up during that attempt at integration exist today, and other, newer, problems exist on top of those problems. The, “Task Force,” should look at and understand, that the problems with the staffing of EMS encompasses a host of issues. Issues, such as training (and by training I mean the culture of teaching as well as learning), management of EMS/ESD (The management has been substandard for years and is now managed by someone who failed as a paramedic student), retention (Because of poor management, people are looking for better opportunities), a poor work schedule (Which is still a, “Pilot Program,” if I’m not mistaken), poor work ethic (Which again comes down to poor management), the fact that integration of the two services would involve a changing of the, “City Charter” (Which, if I’m not mistaken has to be put on a ballot and voted on by the public), the UPW (The Union EMS belongs to), and the list just goes on and on from there.

Is a “Task Force,” a good idea? It’s an idea that has merit. But there needs to be a strict time frame on assessing the issues (All of them) and then addressing of the issues. Keep in mind, integration of the 2 services may not be the best course of action. Correcting the problems may be a better course of action. Even if it means gutting and rebuilding a large portion of EMS/ESD.

My suggestions, if you do decide to form a, “Task Force,” to explore the integration of EMS and HFD, don’t go into it with a preconceived notion of an outcome. All your conclusions will be wrong and your solutions useless. In the end you’ll have wasted time, money, and effort. And be faced with a problem worse than the one that exists now. Also, instead of using the same bureaucratic talking heads and management officials who created the problem the community has right now, perhaps you should include people who used to work for both EMS and HFD on this, “Task Force.” People who are no longer employed by either EMS or HFD but have a strong understanding of the workings and issues associated with this

problem. Their experience and insight could prove more helpful than you might think. If you do include these people, LISTEN TO THEM. Bureaucrats, Politicians, and the EMS/ESD Management have put the community in the position we're all in now. Try something different. You may actually solve the problem. Don't use the people who created the problem, to try and fix the problem. And don't use some private company that some lobbyist or donor to a campaign suggested, to fix this problem. They're not doing it for the community. Just a suggestion. Hopefully it doesn't fall on deaf ears. We shall see.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Maile Lambeth	mlambeth@hawaii.edu	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Honolulu Community College	Support	Nov 17, 2024 @ 08:34 PM

Testimony:

I worked for City and County of Honolulu EMS from 2004-2017. I am still currently licensed as a Paramedic here in the state of Hawai'i. During my time with EMS, we were looking at the possibility of a merger with Fire then as well. Many of our personnel on the road (EMT's and Paramedics) supported this merger. We have always struggled with staffing issues, supply shortages, and a lack of support from our Union despite the many grievances that were filed over the years. Now that I am an instructor for the EMT portion of the Fire Science Program at HCC, I am training future First Responders, however, we are focused on preparing our students for a future with HFD and do not promote a career with EMS. This is due to poor management of our department, a lack of employee morale, the dissolvement of steps, and the difficult task of maintaining longevity due to the immense number of calls that all units are required to respond to on a daily basis. The addition of the EMS academy has proven to be unsuccessful in producing quality EMT's or retaining personnel. I would love nothing more than to be able to encourage more of our students to pursue a career as an EMT or Paramedic. I feel that a merger with HFD would provide more oversight, much needed additional funding and personnel, and an opportunity to properly train new personnel.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Eric Watanabe	wataknobs@gmail.com	96701
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 17, 2024 @ 08:56 PM

Testimony:

Honolulu EMS needs this merger. Ive worked for them for 10 years and they always busy and always short on staff. With the merger there will be more staff, which will equal more ambulances open, which will equal lesser call volume for existing ambulances, which will increase staff moral, which will increase retention. Honolulu ems has been a sinking ship for the past ten years. Dr ireland is doing a much better job than previous leaders, but still ems needs this merger. Please please please help them as we help the citizens of this island

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Jacqueline Nishida	jacky.nishida@yahoo.com	96744
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 17, 2024 @ 09:47 PM

Testimony:

Flight nurse at Hawaii Life Flight in support of integration of EMS and HFD.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Craig Young	craig.young@gmr.net	96819
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 17, 2024 @ 09:54 PM

Testimony:

I'm a pilot at Hawaii Life Flight and support the formation of the task force to ensure the integration of hfd and ems will be done right so services to the community will improve

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Nicholas Higa	nhiga@honolulu.gov	96821
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 17, 2024 @ 10:18 PM

Testimony:

I support the integration of EMS and FIRE. The department appears to be past the point of fixing itself. The challenges of being employed by a faltering department are evident in the amount of paramedics (and EMTS) leaving for other occupations (mostly FIRE and some other medical fields). Throughout the years personnel had to endure forced overtime and now multiple daily EMS unit closures. There is limited Incentive to stay due to no increase in pay for years of service and a rising workload due to elevations in call volume and insufficient resources. Integration may be a win win situation for personnel and community. The possibility for more staffed ambulances will benefit the community and alleviate the stress of the job from the employees.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kea Smith	keasmith20@gmail.com	96734
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 17, 2024 @ 10:58 PM

Testimony:

Aloha City Council Members of the Public Safety Committee,

I am writing testimony in favor and full support of Resolution 24-272 which would create a task force to look into the feasibility of integrating Honolulu Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and the Honolulu Fire Department (HFD).

As a current Paramedic and Station Supervisor with EMS, I have held various positions in the department for the past 14 years and have seen first hand, our service to the public deteriorate with closing of units, leading to prolonged response times and working conditions of EMS personnel become insufferable and unsustainable leading to high attrition rates, low morale and burnout.

I believe the creation of this task force will truly show that a merge between the two departments will extend far beyond operational efficiency. By combining the expertise of both departments, we can ensure that our first responders are better equipped to handle a wide range of emergencies, from medical and trauma incidents to fires and natural disasters. A unified, single department would also facilitate the development of innovative solutions to address the increasing demands on emergency services and ensure the safety of our community. Furthermore, I believe that the integration of these services will foster stronger relationships between HFD and EMS personnel, promoting teamwork and creating a more cohesive, well-trained workforce. This, in turn, will enhance the overall safety and preparedness of our community.

The synergy between HFD and EMS personnel is undeniable, as both are essential to saving lives during emergencies. By merging these two vital services, we can improve coordination, reduce response times and enhance training opportunities for all personnel involved. In addition, such a merger would enable more efficient use of resources, including staffing, equipment, and funding, while fostering a more collaborative approach to emergency response.

In closing, I wholeheartedly support the formation of the integration task force between EMS and HFD, and I am confident that it will lead to better outcomes for both responders, your constituency, and visitors we serve. Thank you for considering this important step toward improving emergency services in our area.

Mahalo,

Kea Smith

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kevin Twomey	kevintwomey84@gmail.com	96734
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 18, 2024 @ 04:40 AM

Testimony:

I am a Paramedic with City & County EMS. I am in full support of creating a task force to integrate EMS into HFD.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Wailua Lind	email002.wl@gmail.com	96818
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 18, 2024 @ 07:00 AM

Testimony:

Aloha, I am currently a female MICT with Honolulu EMS & have been with the department for 18 years. I am writing this in Support of RES24-272. A task force needs to be formed, looking into a merger of Honolulu EMS with HFD. Honolulu EMS has been struggling for many years & is currently drowning. We cannot retain our personnel, MICT's/EMT's & even our dispatchers. The continued short staffing, ambulance closures, increased call volumes & disregard for our

emotional/psychological & physical health by our administration has morale in our department at an all time low. I feel that we are drowning, barely treading water. We need help; we need more personnel, we need more ambulances & we need more incentives to attract & retain people. RES24-272 Is a start in that direction. Please pass this agenda to help Honolulu EMS and to help our community.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
C. Lee	hogwashemail@yahoo.com	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Oppose	Nov 18, 2024 @ 09:25 AM

Testimony:

As a firefighter and former EMS MICT, I can speak intelligently on both sides of the house. I must strongly express opposition to a potential merger at this time. The efficiency and quality of service HFD provides is not mirrored by EMS. Case in point: HFD remains an CFAI Accredited Agency is held accountable to standards (e.g. staffing, response times, etc.). EMS has no such metric and lacks the QA/QI methodology to uphold the standard of excellence in community service. EMS' issues start at the top with Dr. Ireland that opts for publicity stunts like riding on an ambulance instead of managing his Department. Would anyone see it appropriate for Chief Logan to ride in a blue-and-white or Chief Hao to pull hose of a fire apparatus? This is a ridiculous stunt and misuse of administrative staff. Further, EMS isn't transparent with response times and staffing plans. Has the Honolulu Fire Department ever "shut down a station" or "browned out an apparatus"? That's the kind of issues HFD would be assuming by a merger with EMS. I understand EMS could gain immensely from HFD correcting many of these issues. However, it would come at a cost to HFD's level of service. Moreover, what is Dr. Ireland and his staff being paid for? EMS Executive Staff should be addressing these internal issues before looking to shop out their problems. The better plan is to hire EMS staff that can actually fix the issues rather than weaponizing incompetence by passing the "problem child" off.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kawena Kamakaala	kawenavierra@gmail.com	96744
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 18, 2024 @ 09:38 AM

Testimony:

Having both friends and family in the Honolulu Fire Department and EMS, I am in support of this testimony.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Karese Miguel-Hamakua	kpoulosfire@gmail.com	96789
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 18, 2024 @ 09:54 AM

Testimony:

Aloha,

I am a firefighter and paramedic with over six years of experience at Honolulu EMS before transitioning to the Honolulu Fire Department in 2019. Based on my experience working with both agencies, my personal opinion is that a merger between EMS and HFD would be highly beneficial, not only for the public but also for first responders. Ten years ago, the temporary shutdown of EMS units became a significant news story. For example, during Easter Weekend in 2014, KHON2 reported (also reposted to EMS1.com) that four ambulances were out of service in a 24-hour period—two on one shift and two on another). In the past 1-2 years, however, it has become common (and no longer as newsworthy) to see six or more ambulances down simultaneously. This is deeply concerning for public safety, particularly considering that there are only around 21 EMS units on the island.

Additionally, I remain concerned for my former colleagues, many of whom are close friends. EMS personnel work tirelessly, often under extremely difficult conditions. I vividly recall periods when I worked as a paramedic and was so overwhelmed with calls that I didn't have time to eat a proper meal or even use the restroom during a 12-hour shift. Breaks were few and far between, and it was common to handle 12-15 calls in a single shift. The exhaustion from shifts carried over into my personal life as well. Morale was already low during my time in the field, and unfortunately, it has only deteriorated since then. Watching my former coworkers become exhausted and overburdened has been heartbreaking. It is clear that EMS is in urgent need of reform, whether through a merger with HFD or other viable solutions.

One potential benefit of merging EMS with HFD is the opportunity to integrate skill sets, particularly by allowing firefighters who are also licensed paramedics—such as myself—to apply their advanced medical training more effectively. Currently, despite my paramedic certification and experience, I am unable to apply these skills while working as a firefighter. Being able to use my paramedic training while waiting for EMS to arrive could significantly improve patient outcomes, especially in critical situations.

Thank you for your openness to testimony and for considering potential solutions. EMS and HFD have consistently collaborated effectively to enhance the well-being of the community and will continue to do so, regardless of the outcome of any potential merger.

Name: Aaron Lenchanko	Email: celestenip@hawaiifirefighters.org	Zip: 96814
Representing: Hawaii Fire Fighters Association	Position: Support	Submitted: Nov 18, 2024 @ 10:18 AM

Name: Sharleen Perreira	Email: shardust@yahoo.com	Zip: 96744
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Nov 18, 2024 @ 11:11 AM
Testimony:		

The formation of the task force would essentially ensure that if a merger would take place, that it would be done effectively and efficiently. It would also ensure all voices would be heard and represented and the public can receive the best service possible.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Christopher Coloma	colomanati@yahoo.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 18, 2024 @ 12:16 PM

Testimony:

I'm a Paramedic with city and county EMS and am in support the EMS/HFD merger. It will benefit all and needs to happen. With the call volume increasing every year and the decrease in EMS personnel as well as EMS being unable to retain people, it is vital to have the merger go through.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Gary Pascua	gpascua09@gmail.com	96720
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 18, 2024 @ 01:02 PM

Testimony:

The City and County of Honolulu would benefit greatly in a merger between the fire department and emergency medical services . Number 1: they could put a paramedic at most of the fire stations on Oahu and increase rapid response times. Have a two tiered system where the private ambulance company can transport patients to the hospital. 2: would bring an advance life support capability to the fire system where they only have BLS service. 3: state and county will save money and more money can be given to the fire department. The merger will only increase the coverage of emergency care and rapid response on Oahu.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kamehalani Ortiz	kortiz@honolulu.gov	96782
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 18, 2024 @ 01:44 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Council,

My name is Kamehalani Ortiz, and I am honored to serve as the Captain in charge of the CPR section within the Honolulu Fire Department. I oversee the critical training and operational coordination for life-saving measures, including CPR and AED usage, ensuring our personnel and community are equipped to respond to medical emergencies effectively.

I am here today to voice my strong support for the proposal to establish a task force to explore the integration of the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) program into the Honolulu Fire Department.

In my role, I witness firsthand the synergy between fire suppression and emergency medical response. The majority of our calls involve medical emergencies, and as firefighters, we are often the first on the scene. Integration of EMS with HFD would streamline our operations, reduce response times, and enhance the continuum of care we provide to our community.

Currently, our CPR and AED program exemplifies the power of coordinated training and resource management. Expanding that coordination to include EMS would allow us to implement unified training protocols, better allocate resources, and improve outcomes for cardiac arrests and other time-critical emergencies. Furthermore, this integration aligns with national best practices, where combined fire and EMS departments have proven to be more efficient and cost-effective.

I urge the Council to support this initiative, as it has the potential to save more lives and elevate the quality of emergency care across Honolulu. This task force will provide the necessary framework to evaluate feasibility, identify challenges, and recommend solutions to ensure a smooth transition that benefits both our personnel and the community we serve.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration. I am confident that this step will be transformative for public safety in Honolulu, and I look forward to contributing to the discussions as this process moves forward.

Respectfully,
Kamehalani Ortiz
Captain, CPR Section
Honolulu Fire Department

Name:	Email:	Zip:
ashryn lasconia	asklasconia@gmail.com	96782
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 18, 2024 @ 02:03 PM

Testimony:
I am an EMT with the City & County of Honolulu EMS. I fully support the creation of a task force to investigate the integration of EMS with HFD. A merger such as this would greatly benefit our first responders as well as the community of which we serve.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Gabrielle Lennox	gabriellelennox@gmail.com	96706
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 18, 2024 @ 03:51 PM

Testimony:

I agree with establishing a task force to explore the integration of the Emergency Medical Services program into the Honolulu Fire Department.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Noa Terada-Pagdilao	noatp12@gmail.com	96792
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 18, 2024 @ 03:52 PM

Testimony:

I believe creating a task force to explore the merger of HFD and EMS is necessary for both those that support and oppose the merger.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Bernardo Moreira	bmoreira@hawaii.edu	96706
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 18, 2024 @ 04:46 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Council Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to write this testimony today. My name is Bernardo Moreira, and I am here to express my strong support for the proposed merger of Honolulu Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and the Honolulu Fire Department (HFD).

Honolulu EMS has been struggling with significant retention issues, largely driven by the high-stress nature of the job, the overwhelming call volume, and poor management within the department. These challenges have resulted in frequent staff shortages, unit closures, and gaps in coverage that leave communities without critical emergency services.

This problem is further exacerbated by the steadily increasing number of 911 calls, which has not been matched by an increase in available ambulances to respond. HFD, on the other hand, already responds to more medical-related calls than any other type of incident. Firefighters are often the first on the scene, providing critical care until EMS arrives.

By merging EMS with HFD, Honolulu can create a more integrated and efficient emergency response system. HFD's established resources, infrastructure, and strong presence in our communities can bolster EMS capabilities, addressing staffing shortages, improving response times, and ensuring that all residents receive timely and effective care.

Many other cities have successfully adopted similar models, resulting in enhanced emergency services, better patient outcomes, and more efficient use of resources. This merger is a necessary step to modernize and strengthen our emergency response system, ensuring no one in our community is left without help in their time of need.

I urge you to approve this merger for the benefit of our island community. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Bernardo Moreira

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Chadwick Tam	chadwicktam@gmail.com	96797
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 18, 2024 @ 04:59 PM

Testimony:

My name is Chadwick Tam, and I have had the honor of serving as a member of the Honolulu Fire Department for the past 3 years. Prior to that, I spent 10 years working as a Paramedic, where I gained firsthand experience in Emergency Medical Services (EMS). Given my background, I am writing today to express my full support for the integration of the Honolulu EMS division into the Honolulu Fire Department.

Throughout my career, I have witnessed the chronic staffing shortages and the overwhelming challenges faced by EMS personnel, both of which directly affect the quality of care we can provide to our community. The demanding nature of the job, coupled with the difficulties of balancing work and family life, makes the current schedule—12-hour shifts, 12 on and 12 off—unsustainable for many. These issues, along with a lack of effective solutions from the EMS division, are contributing to an alarming rate of burnout and attrition among paramedics and EMTs. Many of our most experienced staff have left Honolulu EMS for reasons that include these staffing shortages, the grueling schedule, and the escalating volume of medical and trauma calls.

This situation is not just a challenge for EMS personnel—it is a crisis that directly impacts the people we serve. If these issues are not addressed, I fear that the situation will continue to deteriorate, and ultimately, our ability to provide critical emergency care will be compromised.

I believe that the integration of Honolulu EMS into Honolulu Fire Department is the solution we need. By following the successful models of other Fire-EMS agencies—such as those on Hawai'i Island or several agencies on the mainland—we can begin to address these staffing shortages, improve scheduling flexibility, and, most importantly, better support our EMS personnel. This integration would allow us to work more cohesively, enhance retention, and ensure that both our teams and the communities we serve receive the best possible care.

In conclusion, I wholeheartedly support this integration and strongly urge the decision-makers to consider the long-term benefits it will bring to our EMS personnel and the citizens of island of Oahu.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Matthew Domingo	mdomingo_11@hotmail.com	96816

Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 18, 2024 @ 05:37 PM

Testimony:

EMS department needs more support.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Christopher Cervantes	ccervantes04@gmail.com	96744
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 18, 2024 @ 06:22 PM

Testimony:

I support the creation of a task force to explore the integration of Emergency Medical Services into the Honolulu Fire Department. I believe that the current status of EMS is that they are often times under staffed and under supported with a high turnover rate. I believe there is a need to address the expanding community need for emergency medical services, and that investigating this issue can only provide for more research and information on how to best achieve this.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Christopher Giacobone	giacobone45@gmail.com	96826
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 18, 2024 @ 06:35 PM

Testimony:

Having worked in EMS for a few years now, I am still relatively new. However, I do take great pride in EMS and the work we do. I believe this task force is a great opportunity to explore how feasible a EMS and Fire merger is and examine the benefits vs cons of such a merger. EMS personnel care deeply about this community and are proud to serve it. Personally, I would be open to something that would help me do that more effectively. This task force could give answers to whether or not a merger with Fire could benefit this.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Gary Fanelli	gfanellijr@gmail.com	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 18, 2024 @ 06:49 PM

Testimony:

I am in support of creating a task force integrating HFD and EMS.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Russ Kadooka	urusai1@hotmail.com	96817
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 18, 2024 @ 09:08 PM

Testimony:

I am a current City & County of Honolulu firefighter and support the formation of a task force to explore the merging of EMS and HFD.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kyle Teves	kteves34@gmail.com	96740
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 18, 2024 @ 10:05 PM

Testimony:

Aloha,

My name is Kyle Teves, I am currently employed with the Hawaii Fire Department as a Fire Medical Specialist II. I currently hold a state and national paramedic license and have 17 years of experience in the fire department with 12 of them based in the EMS sector of our department.

I am writing this testimony in support of establishing a task force to explore the integration of EMS into the HFD. I support this agenda first and foremost because it benefits our community and patients. The integration of EMS and fire provides optimal response in emergency situations because of collective collaboration under one department. The unified protocols can improve safety and patient care. The goal of having a greater amount of available personnel will decrease burnout and excessive overtime. These are just a few of the many benefits to integrating EMS into the HFD.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Chelsey Takahashi	chelseykandi@yahoo.com	96782
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 19, 2024 @ 12:31 AM

Testimony:

I support this task force

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kelly Kihe	kellykihe@hotmail.com	96817
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 19, 2024 @ 04:26 AM

Testimony:

I am writing in support of this Resolution to request the City Administration assemble a Task Force to explore the integration of EMS and HFD. I was employed by EMS for 18 years and retired in 2022 after 14 years as a Paramedic. I was and remain proud of the service I was able to provide to the O'ahu community. During a majority of my career, I was able to experience firsthand the many challenges the EMS department has struggled with. The content of this Resolution mentions news reports that have highlighted these challenges. I can confidently and truthfully speak to the fact that on a surface level, the news reports have accurately reflected as much. However, there is much more to these stories that

deserve to be heard, require attention and sustainable resolution. Staffing shortages, unit closures, increased transfer/transport times and lost revenue are all symptomatic of the larger issue over time, which has been GROSS MISMANAGEMENT. The fact that a Task Force exploring integration of EMS and HFD is being proposed is evidence of this. And those who have been and are currently in those positions of authority within EMS have refused to admit that they have failed the EMS workforce as a whole in favor of their own professional and personal agendas. Further evidence of mismanagement is reflected in the low retention rate of personnel in just the past 5 years (including myself), retirement eligible employees aside. Although I am no longer a paramedic with EMS, I still have somewhat of an ear to the ground of the goings on within and care about what my friends and former co-workers have to contend with. As it is, the profession can be difficult and demanding enough and having to grapple with what has been a chronically toxic culture is insufferable. Simply put, as field personnel, we are trained to care for our community members who call 911, and do so expeditiously and gratefully, but those in management who were supposed to care for us, ignored OUR calls. Despite not knowing what the outcome here might be, or even in the future, I am hopeful that at the least, all of you in the Council and the City Administration, even the general public, will know that we who have worked or continue to work in the field in EMS, deeply and genuinely care. This Task Force can potentially be a positive step in not only improving conditions for personnel, but for the evergrowing O'ahu community as a whole. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Emma Corpuz	magpixie@hotmail.com	96817
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Nov 19, 2024 @ 07:10 AM

Testimony:

I am writing in support of having a Task Force to merge EMS and HFD. I retired as a Paramedic from EMS in 2016, after 25 years of service and have seen the department go through many changes. Most of them not good, and all having to do with the EMS Administration. To be honest, I lost hope a long time ago that the department would turn things around and be better. The possibility of EMS and HFD together was brought up often over the years but it never got as far as just talk. Since it is at this point, I hope the truth and all of the issues can finally come out and be dealt with like they should have been.

Thank you for your time.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Jon Kurosu	jkurosu808@gmail.com	96734
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	I wish to comment	Nov 19, 2024 @ 07:58 AM

Testimony:

I would like to see a task force made only if there is a clear road map made of what their goal is. what parameters will be met for a for/against merger proposal. Without a clear goal the task force will not know what they are searching for when they find it.

Testimony to the Honolulu City Council Public Safety Committee

Date: November 15, 2024

From: Christopher R. Sloman, Former Acting Chief of Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Assistant Chief of Operations

Subject: Advocacy for a Joint Task Force to Study EMS Integration with Honolulu Fire Department (HFD)

Honorable Members of the Honolulu City Council Public Safety Committee,

I am writing to urge the establishment of a joint task force aimed at studying the potential integration of the Emergency Medical Services Division with the Honolulu Fire Department. My background as the Acting Chief of EMS and Assistant Chief of Operations provides me with firsthand insight into the operational and administrative dynamics of these essential services.

Current Challenges:

- **Administrative Overreach:** Currently, EMS operations are heavily influenced by bureaucratic decisions that often prioritize political agendas over public welfare and professional development. This has led to a systemic inefficiency where decisions do not always reflect the best interests of service delivery or personnel development.
- **Lack of Merit-Based Promotion:** There exists a concerning trend within EMS where promotions are not consistently based on merit or experience. Instead, there is a noticeable inclination to favor personal connections or political affiliations, which undermines morale and potentially compromises service quality.
- **Resource Allocation:** Funds intended to enhance EMS capabilities are sometimes redirected or allocated in ways that benefit external business interests rather than directly improving emergency services. This misallocation not only affects service delivery but also hampers the professional growth opportunities for EMS personnel.

Proposed Solution:

The creation of a joint task force to study the integration of EMS with HFD could address these issues in several ways:

1. **Operational Synergy:** By integrating with HFD, which has a strong operational culture rooted in emergency response, EMS could benefit from enhanced training, resource sharing, and a unified command structure that focuses on emergency response efficiency rather than political maneuvering.
2. **Cultural Shift:** Integrating with HFD would potentially introduce a more meritocratic environment, where decisions are made based on expertise and capability. This could lead to a more motivated workforce, directly impacting the quality of emergency care provided to the citizens of Honolulu.
3. **Enhanced Accountability:** A task force would ensure that any integration process is transparent, involving input from both EMS and HFD professionals, community stakeholders, and independent experts. This would help in crafting policies that are more aligned with the needs of the service and the community, rather than political or personal interests.
4. **Resource Optimization:** Combining forces could lead to better use of resources, reducing overhead costs, and avoiding duplication of efforts. This would mean more resources could be directed towards improving service delivery, equipment, and training.

Conclusion:

The integration of EMS with HFD presents an opportunity to transform emergency services in Honolulu into a model of efficiency, professionalism, and community-focused service. I strongly advocate for the establishment of this task force, not only to study this integration but to actively involve those who have dedicated their lives to public safety in the decision-making process. This is critical for ensuring that the future of our emergency services is built on the pillars of merit, efficiency, and genuine public service.

Thank you for considering this testimony. I am available to discuss this matter further and provide any additional information or insights that might assist in your deliberations.

Respectfully,

Christopher R. Sloman
Former Acting Chief, Emergency Medical Services Assistant Chief of Operations

Novembers 16, 2024

To Public Safety Committee Chair Valire Okimoto, Council Chair Waters and Members of the Public Safety Committee and City Council Members

Testimony of Edward Fujioka in Support of Transitioning to a Fire-Based EMS System

Introduction:

Honorable Committee Chair Okimoto, Council Chair Waters and members of the City Council and Safety Committee

My name is Edward (Eddie) Fujioka, I reside in Council Woman Radiant Cordero's district a proud retired EMS District Chief of Honolulu EMS. Unfortunately after working 45 years in EMS, I terminated my service with EMS prematurely due the working environment and management at HESD/EMS. Members, I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed transition from our current EMS system to a fire-based EMS system. The current delivery of Emergency Medical Services in Honolulu is unsustainable and it has been that way for years. This change will significantly enhance the quality and efficiency of Emergency Medical Services in our community. I realize there are numerous testimonies in support, and valid concerns and issues so I will not repeat all of what has been mentioned**. Members, I want to mention that there is a common link. Because Ocean Safety and now EMS want to separate from HESD should get your attention that there must be a change. Resolution 24-272 is the first step toward improving EMS delivery to the residents and visitors on Oahu.**

Benefits of a Fire-Based EMS System:

1. **Rapid Response Times:** Fire departments are known for their quick mobilization and ability to respond to emergencies swiftly. By integrating EMS services into the fire department, we can ensure that patients receive timely medical attention, which is often critical in life-threatening situations.

2. **Improved Patient Outcomes:** Immediate on-scene medical intervention is crucial for survival rates. Firefighters are often the first to arrive at the scene and can provide rapid medical care, leading to better patient outcomes.

3. **Quality of Care:** Fire-based EMS personnel are highly trained and equipped to handle a wide range of medical emergencies. Their continuous patient contact and teamwork enhances the overall quality of care provided.

4. **Cost-Effective Operations:** Integrating EMS into fire departments allows for shared resources and personnel, resulting in cost-effective operations without compromising on the standards of care. This efficient use of resources can lead to significant savings for the community.

5. **Enhanced Community Trust:** Fire departments have a well-established presence and are trusted within the community. Integrating EMS services with fire departments can further enhance public trust and confidence in emergency services.

6. **M and A:** Merging (intergrading) EMS with HFD will reduce costs administratively such as Directors, administrative and office staff, command level Chief's and redundant services (Support Services, supplies, automotive, training, other First Responder and City related policy and procedures.

7. **Integrating EMS and FIRE dispatch:** Combining both services will benefit EMS. Being able to utilize FIRE dispatch personnel may support the filling of vacant positions with EMS. Many times, EMS must reassign field Medics to fill the dispatch positions causing overtime or closures of units. A unified call taking software would need to be adapted to achieve a positive outcome.

I understand that some may have concerns regarding the transition, such as the potential impact on current EMS personnel and operational changes. It is important to ensure that current EMS staff are provided with opportunities for training and integration into the new system. Additionally, clear communication and collaboration between all stakeholders will be essential for a smooth transition.

Conclusion:

Amendment to Resolution 24-272: I recommend amending the task force members listed to include retired EMS and Fire employees at the Supervisory level. I would be honor

In conclusion, forming a task force to study and make recommendations transitioning to a fire-based EMS system presents an opportunity to improve our community's emergency medical services. The benefits of rapid response times, improved patient outcomes, high-quality care, cost-effective operations, and enhanced community trust make this a positive step forward. I strongly urge you to support Resolution 24-272 regarding the establishment of a Task Force for the betterment of our community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Edward Fujioka

Retired EMS District Chief

INTERNATIONAL
LONGSHORE &
WAREHOUSE UNION

1188 FRANKLIN STREET, 4th FLOOR
SAN FRANCISCO
CALIFORNIA 94109
(415) 775-0533
(415) 775-1302 FAX
www.ILWU.org

Honolulu City Council
Public Safety Committee Meeting
November 19, 2024 9:00 a.m.

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF RESOLUTION 24-272

Honorable Members of the Honolulu City Council,

I am writing to express strong support for Resolution 24-272, which seeks to establish a task force to evaluate the integration of the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) program into the Honolulu Fire Department (HFD) and consider the migration of the Health Services and Crisis Outreach Response and Engagement (CORE) programs to other departments or agencies.

This resolution is a forward-thinking step toward addressing critical challenges in our emergency response systems while maximizing efficiency and enhancing community services. Integrating EMS with HFD has the potential to significantly improve emergency response times by streamlining dispatch and communication systems, ensuring faster and more efficient responses to emergencies. Combining personnel and resources under one department can increase the availability of emergency units during peak demand, alleviating current staffing shortages.

Additionally, this integration offers an opportunity to foster cross-training among EMS and HFD personnel, creating a versatile workforce equipped to handle both medical and fire emergencies, thereby strengthening Honolulu's emergency response capabilities.

There may be an increase in costs initially however, consolidating administrative functions and eliminating redundancies will likely result in long-term cost savings. These savings can be reinvested into improving services and purchasing modern equipment. The transition also provides an opportunity to modernize outdated systems and practices, ensuring Honolulu's emergency services remain efficient and innovative.

Furthermore, relocating CORE and Health Services programs to other departments or the Mayor's office would allow these programs to align more closely with their unique missions, such as mental health and crisis outreach, improving their impact on the community.

While transitions of this scale can pose challenges, they also present immense opportunities. Addressing operational differences between EMS and HFD can lead to the creation of a unified, multidisciplinary response system. Any fiscal risks involved are investments in long-term savings and sustainability. Disruptions during the transition can be mitigated with planning and implementation of modern systems.

Overall, this resolution demonstrates a commitment to innovation, collaboration and community well-being, and I strongly urge the Council to adopt Resolution 24-272.

Respectfully,

Brandon Wolff
ILWU Vice President – Hawaii

HAWAII FIRE FIGHTERS ASSOCIATION
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS LOCAL 1463, AFL-CIO
1018 PALM DRIVE, HONOLULU, HAWAII 96814-1929
TELEPHONE (808) 949-1566 FAX: (808) 952-6003
WEBSITE: www.hawaiifirefighters.org

City Council
City and County of Honolulu

Committee on Public Safety
November 19, 2024

Resolution 24-272 Requesting the City Administration to establish a task force to explore the integration of the Emergency Medical Services Program into the Honolulu Fire Department.

My name is Robert H. Lee, President of the Hawaii Fire Fighters Association (HFFA), Local 1463, IAFF, AFL-CIO. The HFFA represents approximately 1,000 active-duty professional fire fighters employed with the Honolulu Fire Department. HFFA **strongly supports** Resolution 24-272.

There have been numerous Emergency Medical Services and the Honolulu Fire Department consolidation studies over the past 30 years that have supported consolidation. Those reports cite performance-based efficiency would improve the delivery of emergency medical services through a merger, the reports also identified critical factors that could impact the success of this consolidation. HFFA believes that a critical factor is the involvement of the exclusive bargaining representatives to be part of the conversation and have input in the process. Resolution 24-272 includes the union representation of the rank-and-file members of the impacted departments.

As you know, HFD personnel are currently trained to the Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) level and hold National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians certification. HFD EMTs have the basic skills necessary to stabilize and transport patients, if needed, and very often are the first on scene for medical responses.

HFFA looks forward to being a part of the dialogue and urges the Committee to adopt this resolution.