

HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL
KE KANIHELA O KE KALANA O HONOLULU
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

No. 26-24

RESOLUTION

URGING THE CITY ADMINISTRATION TO WORK WITH THE STATE ADMINISTRATION TO ESTABLISH THE GROUND EMERGENCY MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM.

WHEREAS, the City Council ("Council") finds that the increasing cost of emergency medical transportation in the City and County of Honolulu ("City") has an adverse effect on low-income community members, many of whom rely on Medicaid for their health insurance coverage; and

WHEREAS, according to news reports, as many as 23 percent of Americans have opted out of ambulance services due to potential costs, thereby placing their health and safety at risk; and

WHEREAS, the State of Hawai'i ("State") Department of Health has increased the fees for emergency ambulance services 10 percent each year for the past three years; and

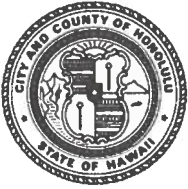
WHEREAS, Medicaid covers approximately 70 percent of emergency medical transportation, leaving patients to be responsible for the remaining 30 percent of emergency medical transportation costs, which, in some cases, may amount to approximately \$800; and

WHEREAS, the Council is concerned that the rising costs and out-of-pocket expenses of ambulance services may cause some residents of the City to decline emergency medical transportation services and, as a result, risk extreme adverse health effects; and

WHEREAS, the Ground Emergency Medical Transportation Program is a federal program that is meant to cover the gap between Medicaid coverage and the cost of ambulance services by providing reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses to ambulance service providers; and

WHEREAS, the State does not currently participate in the Ground Emergency Medical Transportation Program for Medicaid participants; and

WHEREAS, participation in this program will likely provide relief to residents from low-income communities, as well as generate additional revenue for the City at a time when local budgets are increasingly constrained; and



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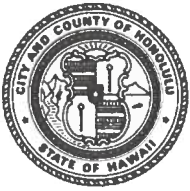
WHEREAS, the Ground Emergency Medical Transportation Program allows the Honolulu Emergency Services Department ("HESD") and the State to leverage federal funds to offset costs of emergency services that are often left unpaid; and

WHEREAS, the additional revenue generated through the Ground Emergency Medical Transportation Program may be appropriated for the HESD to reinvest in life saving equipment, training, and the modernization of ambulances; and

WHEREAS, the Council believes that the City Administration should work with the State Administration to enact the Ground Emergency Medical Transportation Program, which would benefit all residents in the State; and

WHEREAS, the Council believes that participation in the Ground Emergency Medical Transportation Program would demonstrate the City's commitment to supporting the services provided through the HESD; now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu that it urges the City Administration to work with the State of Hawai'i Administration to establish the Ground Emergency Medical Transportation Program; and



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BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Mayor, the Managing Director, the Director of Emergency Services, the Governor, and the Director of the State of Hawai'i Department of Health.

INTRODUCED BY:

Radiant Ordano

DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

JAN 29 2026

Honolulu, Hawai'i

Councilmembers

Report Title:

Emergency Services; Ambulance; Medicaid; Ground Emergency Medical Transportation Program; State of Hawai'i

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