



Name/Address/Email/Phone:

RE: Protecting Emergency Medical Services

Dear

As a constituent and a dedicated EMS professional in your district, I am writing to inform you of five critical pieces of legislation priorities currently before the General Assembly and request your support.

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) are the backbone of our public safety infrastructure. However, the "safety net" is fraying. In our district, we rely on ambulances to be there in minutes, yet the current funding and retirement structures are making that harder to guarantee.

#1 - TENNCARE REIMBURSEMENT SHIFT IN FUNDING

SB1805 / HB1836

SEN. PAUL BAILEY/ REP. MICHAEL HALE

- + Ambulance services currently fund a portion of the state's share in federal drawdown dollars; however, federal law changes have now frozen provider taxes and directed payments.
- + TASA seeks to shift the funding portion currently covered by providers directly to TennCare and the State of Tennessee.
- + **Economic Impact:** This shift is projected to result in **over \$10 million** in increased funding for ambulance reimbursement.

--+ Passage and funding of this bill would eliminate Legislative Priorities #2 & #3 below.

#2 - GROUND AMBULANCE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

SB2221 / HB2097

SEN. KEN YAGER/ REP. JAY REEDY

- + The assessment is a critical funding mechanism that currently generates approximately **\$30 million in federal funding** for EMS providers.
- + This funding is drawn down using approximately \$10 million in revenue generated by the providers themselves.
- + This program ensures the continued availability of supplemental payments that support the high cost of emergency readiness across Tennessee.

#3 - NONEMERGENCY TRANSPORT SUSTAINABILITY

5B748 / HB201

SEN. KEN YAGER/ REP. GARY HICKS

- + CMS regulatory changes in 2020 excluded nonemergency transports from provider tax assessments, leading to significant reimbursement losses for providers.
- + Nonemergency transports are vital for hospital throughput; without them, the 911 systems suffers

from increased wait times and excessive call volume.

- + **The Priority:** Adjust TennCare reimbursement for nonemergency transports to a sustainable level to preserve this essential service.

#4 - PATIENT PROTECTION & FAIR REIMBURSEMENT

S81376 / HB1061

SEN. BO WATSON/ REP. GREG VITAL

- + TASA supports extending "Balance Billing" protections to ground ambulance patients, who were omitted from the federal No Surprises Act.
- + Because EMS is a mandated service rendered before insurance verification, providers must be guaranteed proper compensation from payors.
- + **The Priority:** Prohibit balance billing while establishing a **minimum reimbursement floor** that reflects the actual cost of lifesaving care.

#5 - EMS PROVIDER RETIREMENT RESTRUCTURE

5B2536 / HB2200

SEN. TOM HATCHER/ REP. KELLY KEISLING

- + Tennessee's retirement system (TCRS) already recognizes the hazardous nature of work for police, firefighters, and correctional officers.
- + EMS providers face identical risks and physical demands but lack equivalent hazardous duty recognition in their retirement structure.
- + **The Priority:** Update TN retirement laws to allow EMS providers to purchase hazardous duty time for prior eligible service, aiding in long-term retention.

Our community's safety depends on a stable, well-funded, and respected EMS workforce. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss how these bills specifically impact my area at your convenience.

Thank you for your service to Tennessee and for your consideration of these vital issues.