



EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES ASSOCIATION OF COLORADO

February 24, 2015

Representative Beth McCann, Committee Chair
House Committee for Health, Insurance and Environment
200 East Colfax Ave.
Denver, Colorado 80203

Dear Representative McCann,

On behalf of the Emergency Medical Services Association of Colorado, I am writing to ask for your support on HB 15-1151, Floor for Medicaid Provider Rates by Representative Rankin and Senator Lambert. We believe this legislation is critical to the financial viability of our state's emergency medical service (EMS) agencies.

EMS is an essential community service—the third leg of public safety. Throughout Colorado, paramedics, EMTs and other first responders, both paid and volunteer, serve the emergency and non-emergency needs of over one-half million residents and visitors annually. Vehicles, equipment, training, and ultimately the timeliness and quality of our service is inexorably linked to reimbursement.

The cost of each and every component of the EMS system has and will continue to increase steadily, but payments from commercial insurance, patients, Medicare and Medicaid are declining. Many EMS agencies, especially in rural areas, are struggling to survive. Some are reducing services—even closing.

Colorado's EMS agencies are experiencing dramatic increases in patients enrolled in Medicaid, now are the fastest growing medical payer type in Colorado. Given Medicaid pays roughly 9-11% of the current cost of an ambulance call, this expansion is severely straining many EMS agencies.

HB 15-1151 will almost double Medicaid payments paid to EMS agencies, and help reduce the effects of the increased Medicaid enrollment.

Thank you for your consideration. Your support of HB 15-1151 is needed now and your yes vote is critical. Please feel free to contact me if you have further questions.

Respectfully,

Scott Sholes, President
EMS Chief, Durango Fire-Rescue

cc: Joann Ginal, Paul Brown, Susan Lontine, Daneya Esgar, Diane Mitsch-Bush, Steve Humphrey, Dianne Primavera, Janak Joshi, Kim Ransom, Gordon Klingenschmitt, Su Ryden