



House Republican Policy Committee

Public Safety and First Responders

February 15, 2023

Good morning Chairman Kail and members of the House Republican Policy Committee, my name is Donald DeReamus and I am a Board Member and Legislative Chair of the Ambulance Association of Pennsylvania (AAP). Accompanying me today is Heather Sharar, our Executive Director. Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee. I realize the time constraints so I will be brief.

To put it bluntly, the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) System in this Commonwealth is broken. EMS Agencies are struggling financially from a myriad of crucial issues:

- **Funding** – there is no sustainable funding mechanism supporting the delivery of EMS or the cost of readiness
- **Workforce** – with an annual turnover rate of 30%, there is a severe shortage of EMS providers in the Commonwealth and nationally
- **Reimbursement** – costs to provide service are substantially more than the reimbursement paid resulting in a deficit on every response

These core issues have created a timely access to prehospital EMS care issue in the entirety of this Commonwealth, but especially in rural Pennsylvania.

- A decrease in the EMS workforce equates to less EMS resources and staffed ambulances
- A decrease in staffed ambulances increases response times
- A decrease in EMS resources increases mutual aid responses

A non-viable EMS System impacts 911 emergency response, the movement of critically ill patients between acute care and specialty care hospitals and the movement of patients between hospitals, skilled nursing facilities and other medical care. Any failure in the System directly impacts morbidity and mortality.

I hope you gain a true understanding of the gravity of the issues facing our state's EMS System as they are momentous. We have outlined areas for dialogue of potential solutions in the attached document.

Your commitment during this legislative session, along with the EMS Provider Community and other stakeholders, will determine our future and will have a direct effect on the wellbeing and lives of your constituents and visitors in the Commonwealth.

The Ambulance Association of Pennsylvania (AAP) is a member organization that advocates the highest quality patient care through ethical and sound business practices, advancing the interests of our members in important legislative, educational, regulatory and reimbursement issues. Through the development of positive relationships with interested stakeholders, the AAP works for the advancement of emergency and non-emergency medical services delivery and transportation and the development and realization of mobile integrated healthcare in this evolving healthcare delivery environment.

Our membership includes all delivery models of EMS including not-for-profit, for-profit, municipal based, fire based, hospital-based, volunteer and air medical. Our members perform a large majority of the 2 million annual EMS patient contacts reported to the Department of Health.