



209 S. Highway 9
PO Box 231
Morris, MN 56267
Phone: 320.589.7421
Fax: 320.589.0365

Dear Chair Rest and Members of the Senate Tax Committee:

I'm writing today to ask for your support of SF3886. The bill is proposing \$120 million in emergency aid to provide for short term ambulance service sustainability. The funding is desperately needed by rural ambulance services, especially those with run volumes under 2000 calls per year.

Ambulance services will be forced to cut services and in some cases cease operations if immediate funding is not provided. Reimbursement rates through medicare and medical assistance are inadequate and have been so for many years.

Insurance premiums and deductibles are increasing, while the amount we get reimbursed is decreasing. Increased deductibles mean an increased financial burden on the patients while insurance companies continue to see profits soar.

Uncompensated calls have increased three-fold for our agency in the last three years.

Ambulance services are no longer able to sustain solely on the revenues generated from those that happen to use the service - nor should we expect only a handful of people to fund the readiness that an ambulance service provides to all who live, work, play and visit our service areas across Minnesota.

Continuing to rely on volunteers to subsidize the EMS system is unreasonable. A responsibility and expectation as important as responding and providing life-saving emergency medical care deserves EMTs and Paramedics that are compensated appropriately - with respect to the financial aspect but also when considering the time commitment, risk and emotional toll that this job can have. We certainly saw that level of commitment and risk demonstrated with the ultimate sacrifice in Burnsville recently.

I care deeply and am very proud of the EMS system in Minnesota, particularly here on the western edge of the state. We have excellent clinicians, the PSA model ensures equitable availability of services to all Minnesotans, and our innovation and clinical outcomes as a state have always been at the forefront of the industry nationwide. Now is the time to recognize and fund emergency medical response, preparedness and readiness. The need can not be overstated. I wish I was inflating the severity of the situation, but this is our reality. Immediate action to provide funding needs to be taken now.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Josh Fischer - Director, Stevens County EMS