

# Promote Patient-Centered, High Quality and Efficient Field EMS

## Strengthen Field EMS at the Federal, State, and Local Levels

### **Request:**

Please support legislation to address the challenges plaguing field EMS to better fulfill public expectations so that all who need emergency medical care in the field can depend upon the highest quality of care and transport. In the House, **cosponsor the *Field EMS Quality, Innovation, and Cost-Effectiveness Improvements Act (H.R. 809)*** by having a member of your staff contact Teresa Buckley with Representative Larry Bucshon (IN-8). In the Senate, **please support efforts to promote and cosponsor similar legislation** once companion legislation is introduced.

### **Background:**

The landmark 2006 Institute of Medicine (IOM) Report, "Emergency Medical Services: At the Crossroads"<sup>1</sup>, identified systemic problems plaguing our nation's emergency medical services (EMS) system. EMS is multi-jurisdictional with federal responsibility tasked across numerous agencies resulting in federal support for EMS that is fragmented, limited, and all too often overlooked in favor of other needs. Other systemic problems identified by IOM include: insufficient coordination among EMS providers, disparities in response times, uncertain quality of care, lack of readiness and inadequate federal funding for disaster preparedness, divided professional identification of EMS personnel, and a limited evidence base of emergency medical interventions.

The *Field EMS Quality, Innovation, Cost-Effectiveness Improvement Act* would provide a path out of the crossroads and toward the vision outlined by the IOM. It addresses many of the challenges impeding the ability of EMS to better fulfill public expectations so that all who need emergency medical care in the field can depend upon the highest quality of care and transport to the most appropriate clinical setting. Among IOM's recommendations addressed in the bill is the establishment of the Department of Health and Human Services as the primary federal agency for EMS and trauma. The legislation also would establish new EMS programs; enhance research initiatives; and promote high quality, innovation and cost-effective field EMS.

### **Costs:**

The legislation does not add to the federal deficit. It establishes an EMS Trust Fund to be funded by voluntary contributions made by taxpayers when filing their federal income tax forms for the purpose of funding the programs provided in the bill. The bill directs the Secretary of HHS to utilize discretionary funds for start up costs for the programs under the Office of EMS and Trauma.

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<sup>1</sup> 2006 Institute of Medicine (IOM) Report, "Emergency Medical Services: At the Crossroads"