



National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians  
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April 20, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC. 20515

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, and Minority Leader McCarthy,

On behalf of the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians ([NAEMT](http://www.NAEMT.org)), please accept our deep appreciation for the efforts of Congress to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

We applaud your efforts to secure the economic relief and stimulus that is sorely needed for families and communities, along with funding for those fighting this devastating virus in our hospitals and public health departments. However, the needs of our EMS agencies and personnel serving on the frontlines of this pandemic war were not adequately addressed through the CARES Act.

We have, and continue to incur, extensive additional expenses for personal protection equipment (PPE), overtime pay, and other medical equipment and supplies directly related to COVID-19 that are not covered by reimbursements from CMS or commercial insurers for patient transports. EMS must respond to every 9-1-1 medical call prepared for a COVID-19 patient. However, EMS is still only reimbursed if the patient is transported to a hospital or another appropriate facility.

At the same time, many EMS agencies across the country are experiencing a sharp decline in 9-1-1 medical response and transports as Americans are reluctant to call 9-1-1 for non-COVID-19 medical emergencies, and as hospitals have cancelled all elective surgeries and related

medically necessary transports. Our costs are increasing exponentially to address COVID-19, while our total revenues are decreasing.

All EMS systems, whether they are public, private or a combination of both, are struggling. The additional burdens placed upon our EMS systems and personnel are challenging even for the strongest systems. We respectfully ask for your help to ensure that our EMS personnel may safely continue to serve our communities:

- Beginning immediately during this public health crisis, amend the Stafford Act to enable all 9-1-1- medical responders a one-time opportunity to apply directly to FEMA for Public Assistance program grants. This will allow all EMS agencies to apply for financial assistance and for state and local governments to focus their limited resources on directly combating the pandemic. We ask that the 25 percent match be waived during the pandemic response.
- Require CMS to reimburse all ground ambulance providers for performing protocol-driven treatments in place without transport during the COVID-19 pandemic response. This coverage will help limit the spread of COVID-19 by keeping patients with low acuity medical conditions at home and out of hospitals or other facilities to help preserve hospital capacity and avoid exposing additional people to COVID-19.
- Protect paramedics and EMTs by directing FEMA to provide them with higher priority access to PPE and COVID-19 testing. Paramedics and EMTs are too often not given priority access to PPE and testing even though they are frequently the first healthcare professionals to come into contact with COVID-19 patients. Please also include all EMS personnel in hazard pay and other compensation for essential workers.

Thank you very much for your consideration of our requests and for your leadership during this national and global health crisis.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Matt Zavadsky".

Matt Zavadsky, MS-HSA, NREMT  
President, NAEMT