



NEWS RELEASE

April 10, 2019
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Illinois Senator Dick Durbin To Receive 2019 NAEMT EMS Legislator of the Year Award

Clinton, Miss. – The National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (NAEMT) will present Sen. Dick Durbin (D-IL) with the 2019 NAEMT EMS Legislator of the Year Award on April 10 during [EMS On The Hill Day](#), the largest national advocacy event for emergency medical services (EMS) professionals. This prestigious award recognizes a member of Congress who demonstrates an outstanding commitment to, and support of, high quality prehospital and emergency medical care, as well as the EMS professionals who dutifully serve our nation’s patients.

“I’m honored to accept this award, but the real award goes to all of our first responders in Illinois and across the country who get up every day ready to protect the communities they bravely serve,” said Sen. Durbin. “As with passage last year of the SIREN Act, I will always look for ways to make sure our rural health leaders have the tools and resources they need to tackle the challenges their jobs throw at them. Thank you to NAEMT for your advocacy partnership and recognition.”

Sen. Durbin introduced the Senate bill, [Supporting and Improving Rural EMS Needs \(SIREN\) Act](#), to create a grant program for EMS agencies in rural areas, many of which are at the forefront of the opioid epidemic, to support recruitment, retention, education, and equipment for EMS personnel in rural areas. The SIREN Act was signed into law as part of the [Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018](#). NAEMT worked with the International Association of Fire Chiefs and our congressional sponsors to get this legislation introduced and passed, with support from the leaders and members of the International Association of Firefighters and the National Volunteer Fire Council.

Matt Zavadsky, President of NAEMT noted, “Passage of the SIREN Act into law was made possible by consistent collaboration among EMS leaders and focused meetings with members of Congress. It is an EMS victory due to the efforts of many and the tremendous leadership of Sen. Durbin and his congressional colleagues for which we are very grateful. NAEMT applauds Sen. Durbin for supporting the needs of our profession, rural EMS practitioners, and the patients we serve. He is a true champion of rural EMS practitioners across the country and in his home district in Illinois.”

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About NAEMT

Formed in 1975 and more than 67,000 members strong, the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians is the only national association representing the professional interests of all emergency and mobile healthcare practitioners, including emergency medical technicians, advanced emergency medical technicians, emergency medical responders, paramedics, advanced practice paramedics, critical care paramedics, flight paramedics, community paramedics, and mobile integrated healthcare practitioners. NAEMT members work in all sectors of EMS, including government agencies, fire departments, hospital-based ambulance services, private companies, industrial and special operations settings, and in the military.

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