



January 19, 2024

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
S-128, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins
Vice Chair
Committee on Appropriations
United State Senate
S-146A, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kay Granger
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
H-307, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C 20515

Dear Chair Murray, Vice Chair Collins, Chair Granger and Ranking Member DeLauro:

On behalf of the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (NAEMT), representing our nation's Paramedics and Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs), thank you for your ongoing support of the EMS workforce. The SIREN Act grants provide critical services to their patients and communities nationwide, especially in the most rural parts of our country.

As you work on the FY 2024 appropriations bills, we respectfully request the Labor-HHS-Education Conference Report include the House level of \$31 million for this critical program.

EMS agencies across the United States are facing crisis-level challenges in recruiting and retaining personnel. The additional burdens placed on EMS systems and personnel during the pandemic were challenging even for the strongest systems and reinforced the great need for increased federal support for EMS in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (LHHS) Appropriations bill for SIREN grants. Also known as the Rural EMS Equipment and Training Assistance (REMSTEA) program, within the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), these funds are focused on ensuring rural areas have access to the EMS services essential to every community.

EMS faces challenges in delivering quality emergency response and service coordination, in part due to recent declines in primary care and hospital service availability, greater distances between healthcare facilities, and low reimbursement rates. In addition to the aforementioned difficulties,

EMS agencies face ever-greater responsibilities—preparing for disasters and bioterror threats, supporting the needs of an aging population, and serving on the front lines of the opioid and fentanyl crisis.

While the lack of federal investment in our nation’s EMS system has always been a challenge, the pandemic exacerbated the challenge; many EMS systems in our country are at the breaking point or have ceased to function, leaving many communities without EMS. Rural systems, struggling before the pandemic, are in the greatest need.

In closing, we respectfully request \$31 million for SIREN/REMSTEA grants in the final FY 2024 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies (Labor HHS) bill to provide much needed grants to already strained rural EMS agencies working to provide life-saving medical care to critically ill and injured patients in their communities.

Again, thank you for your strong support. We stand by to provide additional context or information where it may be helpful.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan Bailey". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Susan Bailey, MSEM, NRP
President, NAEMT