

Inter-County Association of Western New York

% Steuben County Legislature, 3 East Pulteney Square, Bath, New York 14810

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Representing the Counties of Allegany, Cattaraugus, Cayuga, Chautauqua, Chemung, Erie, Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Niagara, Ontario, Orleans, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Tompkins, Wayne, Wyoming, and Yates

RESOLUTION NO. IC-006-24

URGING THE GOVERNOR AND THE STATE LEGISLATURE TO SUPPORT, AND ENACT, THE NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES (NYSAC) “RESCUING LOCAL EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (EMS) PACKAGE”.

WHEREAS, throughout the State, Counties are contending with a shortage of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel in their communities; and

WHEREAS, EMS providers across the State are in crisis due to rising costs and high demand for increasingly complex services; and

WHEREAS, Counties in New York are being asked to fill growing gaps in EMS services, but do not have the resources, flexibility, or statutory authority to develop county-wide or publicly funded EMS programs; and

WHEREAS, EMS is a form of healthcare and is subject to the same escalating costs as the rest of the healthcare industry. Municipalities that operate EMS departments, or contract for services with those that do, feel the ongoing financial strain of these costs that are far outpacing inflation; and

WHEREAS, local governments’ efforts to collaborate on joint EMS services across municipal and county boundaries are hindered by the current law, which prohibits counties and local municipalities from creating joint taxing districts for EMS services; and

WHEREAS, the Inter-County Association of Western New York urges the State Legislature to amend the General Municipal Law to allow flexibility within local governments to help solve the issues within the EMS crisis and to consider EMS an essential service; and

WHEREAS, the Inter-County Association of Western New York propels for a change in the current law by allowing for joint taxing districts, property tax exemptions, EMS Medicaid reimbursements, income and property tax credit, increase of tax income credit, and patient transport on the Thruway for EMS services.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, the Inter-County Association of Western New York, representing 2.9 million citizens in the State of New York, is in full support of the New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC) “Rescuing Local Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Package” which consists of the following proposed state legislation and programs for Emergency Medical Services:

- **S.4020-B (Mayer) / A.3392-B (Otis):** Special Taxing Districts & EMS Being Deemed an Essential Service. This comprehensive legislative package allows special taxing districts to be created to fund EMS services. In addition, this legislation would recognize EMS as an essential service and provide reforms to the Emergency Medical Services Council;
- **S.5000 (May) / A.4077 (Lupardo):** Property Tax Exemption for EMS Services. This legislation would remove EMS services from the real property tax cap, which would allow local municipalities to expand and better support their local EMS services. This measure is needed in the short-term while other solutions are being discussed;
- **5.8486 (Hinchey) / A.9102 (Kates):** Authorization of Reimbursement for Treatment in Place and Transportation to Alternative Destinations. This legislation authorizes Medicaid reimbursement to emergency medical services (EMS) agencies for providing Treatment in Place (TIP) to a patient at the point of response; as well as Transportation to an Alternate Provider (TAP), getting a patient to the most appropriate health care setting other than a hospital, such as a mental health clinic, rehabilitation facility or urgent care;
- **5.6630 (Mannion) / A.6274 (Barrett):** Income Tax and Property Tax Credits. This legislation allows volunteer firefighters and ambulance workers to claim both state income and local property tax credits;
- **S.7286 (Martinez) / A.7524 (Thiele):** Income Tax Credit Increase. This legislation increases the volunteer firefighters' and ambulance workers' personal income tax credit from \$200 to \$800 for eligible individuals and from \$400 to \$1,600 for eligible married joint filers;
- **5.3223 (Sanders) / A.9237 (Hevesi):** Targeted Medicaid Rate Increase for EMS Providers. This bill would create a methodology for ambulance reimbursement under Medicaid that more closely approximates the cost of providing the service. Ambulances are required by law to pick everyone up, including Medicaid patients. It is unfair to require these ambulance companies to accept Medicaid patients and then not fairly reimburse them for the costs of providing services to these patients;
- **S.6645 (Comrie) / A.6136 (Eachus):** Thruway Permits for EMS Vehicles. This legislation requires the thruway authority to issue emergency services permits to EMS vehicles as is already done for fire vehicles, which would exempt EMS from being required to pay tolls while transporting patients on the NYS thruway.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, copies of this resolution shall be forwarded to Honorable Kathy Hochul, New York State Governor; all members of the New York State Senate; all members of the New York State Assembly and the New York State Association of Counties.

STATE OF NEW YORK)

ss.:

COUNTY OF STEUBEN)

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript of a resolution duly adopted by the Inter-County Association of Western New York while in session in Chemung County on the 19th day of April, 2024.

Dated: April 29, 2024
Bath, New York



Amanda L. Chapman, Secretary
Inter-County Association of Western New York