

Reps. Loudenbeck, Shankland, Moulton: Community EMS Bill Signed Into Law

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Madison –Assembly Bill 151 (AB 151) authored by Rep. Amy Loudenbeck (R-Clinton), Rep. Katrina Shankland (D- Stevens Point) and Sen. Terry Moulton (R- Chippewa Falls) was signed into law by Governor Walker today after passing both legislative chambers with unanimous bipartisan support.

AB 151 advances opportunities for non-emergency health care services in Wisconsin by creating and defining community paramedics (CPs) and community emergency medical technicians (CEMTs). It also creates the framework allowing hospitals, private ambulance companies, and municipal EMS providers to develop new strategies for delivering quality care, in the right place, at the right time.

“The Wisconsin EMS Association commends Reps. Loudenbeck and Shankland and Sen. Moulton for their tireless effort and commitment to the safety and continuum of care for all patients in Wisconsin. Today EMS and Fire unite as one voice by utilizing their skills and talents to improve patient outcomes while reducing costs of healthcare to individuals, hospitals, insurance providers and communities, said Marc Cohen, Executive Director of the Wisconsin EMS Association

“I am pleased the Governor is signing this important public health legislation into law. Community EMS promises greater flexibility and room for innovation to lower healthcare costs and meet any number of local healthcare goals,” said Sen.

Moulton.

Greenfield Fire Chief Jon Cohn, President of the Wisconsin Fire Chiefs Association stated, “The future of health care is to be proactive instead of reactive. The Wisconsin Community EMS Bill achieves this by optimizing health system performance, improving the patient care experience, improving the health of populations and reducing the per capita cost of health care. Thanks to our Legislators for recognizing the need to shift and allow these expanded services.”

“Wisconsin has many challenges in the health care workforce, including an aging population,” said Rep. Shankland. “Community EMS helps bridge this gap by expanding patient-centered care, especially in regions that are underserved, rural, or have high health care demands. This bill will offer local communities a new innovative tool to improve public health outcomes and serve at-risk patients, and I’m excited to see the positive impact it will have.”

“The Professional Fire Fighters of Wisconsin are energized to promote Community EMS to our most medically at risk citizens. Fire Fighters and EMS Professionals are experts in prevention, and the impact of this legislation will be felt by those in need of better access and more help throughout rural and urban Wisconsin, said Mahlon Mitchell, President of the Professional Fire Fighters of Wisconsin.

Patrick Ryan, owner of Ryan Brothers Ambulance Service and Past-President of the Professional Ambulance Association of Wisconsin (PAAW) said, “PAAW is extremely proud to be a part of this collaborative effort from all across EMS in Wisconsin to pass this enabling legislation for CEMS. Because of this bill, services throughout the state will be able to develop and implement CEMS programs that will improve the health and well-being of our citizens.”

“Pilot programs have already demonstrated that community-based, mobile integrated health produces improvements in health outcomes and medical cost savings. I hope to continue to hear stories about the life-changing impacts on CEMS in the communities across the state,” said Rep. Loudenberg.