

Wisconsin EMS Association: Applauds state Senate unanimous passage of 3 EMS bills

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“On behalf of our 6,000 members and 360 EMS departments, we wish to thank the Wisconsin State Senate for their actions today by unanimously approving three EMS legislative proposals,” **stated Alan DeYoung, Executive Director of the Wisconsin EMS Association.** “Senate Bills 680 and 681 would expand worker’s compensation coverage of diagnosed PTSD for EMS providers. Assembly Bill 874 would assist ambulance services with obtaining greater Medicaid reimbursement to close the gap on uncompensated costs.”

The Wisconsin EMS Association wishes to provide a special thank you to the lead authors and the additional bipartisan co-sponsors of these legislative proposals:

- SB-680: Sen. André Jacque (R-DePere) and Rep. Cody Horlacher (R-Mukwonago).
- SB-681: Sen. André Jacque (R-DePere) and Rep. David Armstrong (R-Rice Lake).
- AB-874: Sen. Mary Felzkowski (R-Irma) and Rep. Amy Loudenberg (R-Clinton).

SB-680 EMS PTSD Worker’s Comp. Changing the conditions of liability for worker’s compensation benefits for emergency medical services (EMS) practitioners.

SB-681 PTSD Workers Comp. Changing the conditions of liability for worker’s compensation benefits for emergency medical services practitioners, emergency medical responders, volunteer fire fighters, correctional officers, emergency dispatchers, coroners and coroner staff, and medical examiners and medical examiner staff.

AB-874 EMS Medicaid Reimbursement Methodology. Emergency medical

transportation services under Medical Assistance program and making an appropriation.

The greatest challenges facing local EMS today are staffing and financing. Wisconsin EMS is financed through local municipal budgets and service call charges that are paid for by individual payment or reimbursement from private insurance, Medicare or Medicaid.

EMS services are predominantly, nearly 80 percent, provided or contracted for by municipal governments (towns, villages, cities and some counties). In addition, nearly 80% of EMS is volunteer based, meaning these services rely upon individuals to volunteer as EMS providers to staff an ambulance 24-hours 7-days a week.

When someone dials 911, there is an expectation that life-saving services will arrive. The ability for EMS to respond in many areas of the state has become a challenge – and, in some cases nonexistent. Various strategies are needed. These legislative proposals represent pieces toward that overall solution.