



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Lea Webb

# **Senator Webb Announces Budget Win for the Tompkins County Rapid Medical Response Program**

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**Ithaca, NY** - Today, Senator Webb announced that she has secured \$300,000 in state funding through the Department of Health in the FY25 NYS Budget to support the ongoing operating costs of the Tompkins County Rapid Medical Response Program.

The Tompkins County Rapid Medical Response Program is an innovative 2-year pilot program designed to augment local EMS services with an additional layer of coverage across the county and improve wait times in the case of medical emergencies. The Rapid Medical Response program launched on April 2, 2024 and currently operates three rapid medical response vehicles throughout the County stationed in locations that were determined based on analysis of current response times for emergency calls. The county has also hired nine EMTs to support the program.

**Said Senator Lea Webb**, "I applaud Tompkins County for implementing an innovative solution to a problem facing many rural regions of our state, where EMS services are stretched thin and working tirelessly to respond to increased call volume over great distances. The Tompkins County Rapid Medical Response Program is already delivering on its promise to decrease wait times during medical emergencies and ensuring that residents and visitors to Tompkins County get assistance when they need it. I am thrilled that I was able to secure funding in the state budget to help sustain this critical program. EMS is an essential partner in our community health systems and I will continue to fight for policies and resources to

ensure EMS are able to effectively and safely serve our community.”

**Said Daniel Klein, Chair, Tompkins County Legislature:** “Our new Rapid Medical Response project helps everyone: it provides support for the amazing group of volunteer first responders, it provides back-up for the Towns of Groton, Dryden, and Ulysses who already invest heavily in their ambulance services, it frees-up our private ambulance service so they can better respond to more critical calls and to calls that they can bill for services provided, and it helps our residents who expect that someone will show up quickly when they call 911.”

**Said Shawna Black, Vice Chair, Tompkins County Legislature:** “Tompkins County is excited to offer a new rapid response model that will, no doubt, be a model for other municipalities across the state. I would like to thank Senator Webb for her advocacy and support in securing funding. By providing a county-wide first responding program we are able to help people - when time is precious. As always, we continue to be grateful for the many volunteer and paid first responders in Tompkins County. Your dedication and ongoing service saves lives on a daily basis.”

**Said Robert Cantemo, Mayor, City of Ithaca,** “I am extraordinarily grateful for Senator Webb's advocacy and support of the Tompkins County Rapid Medical Response program. Chairman Klein, County Administrator Holmes, and my colleagues at the County Legislature have adopted an innovative approach to EMS and rescue services that promise to improve health outcomes countywide. By securing state funding for this program, Senator Webb has yet again demonstrated her deep understanding of our local challenges and it is testament to her deep relationships within and knowledge of our community.”

**Ruth Groff, Supervisor, Town of Lansing,** “As one of the largest towns in Tompkins County without a medical transport service, Lansing views the Tompkins County Rapid Medical Response program as a necessary service for its residents. Lansing typically has the largest volume of calls for EMS services from towns without a transport service, and this program will bring a positive change to Lansing by improving availability of services. Lansing wishes to thank Senator Webb for her efforts in securing this funding for Tompkins County, which will have a significant positive impact on the welfare of its residents.”

**Said Rordan Hart, Mayor, Village of Trumansburg,** “The Tompkins County Rapid Medical Response program is a ground breaking and innovative effort

designed to supplement and support the existing EMS agencies in the County. Thank you to Senator Webb for securing additional funding for this program which will have a positive, long-term impact on the quality of EMS services provided to all County residents."

**Mark Witmer, Supervisor, Town of Caroline**, "I am just extremely grateful to the many, many folks that made this happen, from the past work of TCCOG's Emergency Services Task Force, to the commitment and determination of my colleagues on my small TCCOG EMS Subcommittee, including the leadership at the Tompkins County Department of Emergency Response, to the many stakeholders in our community that provide emergency medical services, to the entire Tompkins County Legislature. We started with a determination that something had to be done, and the collective will, energy, and efforts of everyone resulted in this innovative program to address this essential community need. This is a key reason that I so much enjoy my job - committed folks all pulling in the same direction, working to serve the community."

"We can't thank Senator Webb enough for her efforts to secure this funding in the New York State budget," **stated Michael Stitley, Director of Tompkins County Emergency Response**. "Since our EMS team was activated on April 2nd, we've already seen it pay dividends and meet many of the objectives laid out for the program. We truly believe Tompkins County's Rapid Medical Response program can serve as a model for other counties to emulate."

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