



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pamela Helming

Senator Helming Announces Bill Signed Creating Rural Ambulance Task Force

PAMELA HELMING January 11, 2022

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Senator Pam Helming announced that [legislation she co-sponsored \(S.3503-C\)](#) creating a Rural Ambulance Services Task Force has been signed into law. The 12-member task force will evaluate the unique challenges faced by ambulance service providers in rural areas and make recommendations for improvements to support public health and safety.

Senator Pam Helming said, “It is important that we take an in-depth, comprehensive look at emergency services in rural areas and the unique challenges ambulance providers face, from funding to recruitment to resources. It is critical that residents of our rural communities have access to timely emergency care. Thank you to Covert Town Supervisor Mike Reynolds for partnering with me to bring local stakeholders to the table to seek solutions supporting rural EMS and the people who rely on their lifesaving services.”

Syed Ahmed Mustafa, President and CEO of Northeast Quadrant Advanced Life Support (NEQALS) said, “As a first responder with over 30 years’ experience, much in rural areas, I can attest to the unique needs and challenges of our rural Emergency Medical Services. Our EMTs and paramedics, both volunteer and career, are heroes in every sense of the word and we need to take an in-depth look at how to bolster staffing levels and provide the resources these agencies need in order to continue providing the safety net and lifesaving services communities throughout the state need. The establishment of this task force is a crucial step forward to meeting the needs of our rural EMS providers and I thank Senator Helming for her leadership on this issue and getting this bill passed and signed into law.”

Michael Reynolds, Covert Town Supervisor said, “Thank you Senator Helming for supporting our local rural municipalities’ efforts encouraging Governor Hochul to sign bill S.3503-C. The Town of Covert Council members fully recognize that ambulance services provide critical emergency health care to rural communities, and with that comes budgetary increases and extreme tax burdens to low income and disadvantaged communities. Along with Senator Helming, the Town of Covert strongly supports this bill. Establishing this task force to study the needs of rural ambulances throughout New York State is essential, literally, to our life support services.”

Matt Sproul, Chief of Canandaigua Emergency Squad said, “We are extremely fortunate to have Senator Pam Helming and others understand that emergency services are at a critical point.

In rural areas, patients are not receiving the emergency care that they may need in a timely fashion due to many variables. Establishing the New York State Rural Ambulance Services Task Force will add significant value to understand the complexities and barriers that ambulances face day to day, such as adequate numbers of certified staff, reimbursement for operations, and equipment issues. Unless there is significant change, more EMS agencies will have to close which will be detrimental to our communities.”

Last summer, Senator Helming co-hosted a rural ambulance roundtable with regional EMS providers and state, county and local officials. Advocating for the needs of rural ambulances and emergency first responders remains a top priority for Senator Helming this legislative session.

“Our local ambulance and EMS services are always looking for volunteers and this is a great way to serve your neighbors and community. Thank you to all of our local EMS professionals for their dedicated service to the people of our communities,” said Senator Helming.