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**NYS EMS COALITION**

OUR MEMBERS WORKING TOGETHER



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February 1, 2012

The NYS Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Coalition represents the entire spectrum of EMS providers in New York State. We fully support Governor Cuomo's efforts to improve efficiency and accountability and reduce waste in NY government. The work of the SAGE Commission to redesign Public Health Law Article 30 wholeheartedly seeks to achieve these ends at the State and Regional EMS levels.

Years of experience, decades of change and previous redesigns have demonstrated that the participation and involvement of physicians at the local, regional, and state levels is imperative for the efficient and effective operation of any EMS system or service. Physician medical directors must continue to be afforded a seat in oversight, operations, and policy making at all levels of our NY State EMS system.

The changes to Public Health Law affecting EMS are substantial and significantly change the oversight and delivery of EMS. In the best interests of uninterrupted public safety and to assure a smooth transition to a more efficient system, the NYS EMS Coalition recommends that changes to PHL Article 30 take effect no less than 180 days after passage into law.

Representation of Rural EMS is critical for service delivery in NY State. The NYS EMS Coalition recommends that Rural EMS be explicitly allocated a voice in regional and state level decision making processes. This could be accomplished by strategically aligning one of the proposed six EMS Advisory Boards to serve as the voice of Rural EMS Care or by adding extra EMS Advisory Boards so as to assure a redistricting that would not consolidate all of New York's rural areas into Advisory Boards composed of predominantly urban neighbors.

We applaud the continued recognition of funding priority for EMS Training at the EMT Basic level. This represents the most important entry-level ambulance provider in our EMS system. We recommend that equal priority be afforded to First Responder training. Certified First Responders (or Emergency Medical Responders) arrive before ambulances in many areas of NY, providing lifesaving care and treatment. Funding for First Responders is also a priority for New York's EMS system. Quite frankly, the strong work of our legislature in funding EMS training at all levels, from First Responder through Paramedic, has directly lowered health care costs for all New Yorkers over the past two decades.

Finally, as EMS professionals, the members of the NYS EMS Coalition stand ready to assist in any way needed to assure a smooth, coordinated and deliberate transition to a more effective EMS system. We respectfully request a meeting to provide input and support as we begin this important step into the future.