



Position Statement

Endorsement of the Proposal to Establish a U.S. Emergency Medical Services Administration

Adopted July 16, 2005

WHEREAS; the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Association of Colorado represents the professional interests of EMS response professionals throughout the State of Colorado;

WHEREAS; Emergency Medical Services professionals from throughout the state respond to hundreds of thousands of request for service each year in every community in our state. They serve their communities as both career and volunteer professionals in a variety of EMS systems including: private companies, fire-service, hospital-based, non-profit, special district, county and municipal services. These professionals are a critical element of our state's public safety and health-care infrastructure that has been predominantly left out of preparedness initiatives since September 11, 2001 receiving only 4% of federal first responder funding nationwide;

WHEREAS; Federal offices that have been involved in EMS have had little to do with direct responder support, responder health and safety or operational innovation targeted for street level operations. The recent past demonstrates that the global federal system has been primarily concerned with curriculum development and modest medical intervention programs. While these issues are important from a global EMS system perspective, EMS response support and development of the responder have gone unaddressed resulting in what can best be described as the missing center of gravity. This has led to trivial support for field operations and marginalized EMS agencies;

WHEREAS; Emergency Medical Services systems have a multifaceted role: as essential public safety responders, side-by-side with fire and police; as an out-of-hospital component of the health care continuum; and as public health providers. As such, there are numerous federal Departments that have complementary objectives with the EMS mission. However, all of these Departments have such a broad scope that EMS receives little, if any, priority. The EMS program office in DOT / NHTSA appears to have the most prominent EMS role in the federal government, yet their involvement stems from the formative years when EMS was primarily linked to automobile crashes. They have made progress, but NHTSA's focus diverges from the evolution of EMS;

WHEREAS; EMS needs an officially recognized seat at the table as first responder policy, funding, and operations are debated and charted at the federal level. To this end, EMS deserves an appropriate home in the federal government that is afforded to the other first responder constituencies. The EMS Association of Colorado believes that this "seat at the table" is best accomplished through an empowered lead federal agency, not an interagency committee with a proven track record of obscurity and failure to represent our profession effectively;

WHEREAS; the Emergency Medical Services Association of Colorado supports all objectives articulated by the George Washington University Homeland Security Policy Institute report, including but not limited

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to: the creation of a national EMS Administration, a national training academy, data collection and research;

WHEREAS; the EMS Association of Colorado also strongly asserts that the U.S. EMS Administration must not be assumed under United States Fire Administration (USFA). Emergency Medical Services in the United States is not the exclusive domain of the fire service, but is instead a collection of locally defined systems engineered to best serve the public at the community level. EMS must have autonomy to effectively advance as a public safety and health care entity regardless of the type of EMS delivery model;

WHEREAS; The EMS Association of Colorado believes the optimal solution to advance EMS in the United States and within the federal government, both from a policy and financial perspective, is to create a U.S. EMS Administration as a distinct component of the Department of Homeland Security;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that, July 16, 2005, the Emergency Medical Services Association of Colorado fervently endorses the concept of creating a United States Emergency Medical Service Administration to effectively support EMS and the protection of this nation.

The Emergency Medical Services Association of Colorado is a not-for-profit society of emergency medical service professionals, founded in 1973. EMSAC is involved in many facets of EMS, with three primary missions, to:

- *Advocate,*
- *Communicate and*
- *Educate.*

Membership of nearly 3,000 comprises paramedic-, intermediate- and basic-level EMTs, EMS first responders, physicians and nurses; and emergency dispatchers, medical educators and researchers and EMS training institutions.

Members are both paid and volunteer professionals, from the urban centers of the state as well as our wide open rural and frontier regions. Our members serve with ambulance services, fire departments, search and rescue teams and ski patrols; and in hospitals, industrial plants, dispatch centers and the military.