

From: Drew Hazelton <dhazelton@rescueinc.org>
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Subject: EMS bill update

Windham County Legislators

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for your work on EMS legislation. We have spent years watching the statewide EMS system slowly unravel around us with increasing costs, workforce shortages and burdensome regulation. The comprehensive language that Senator White is working on will help to address many challenges facing our region and make system changes that support ongoing workforce development in EMS. Rep. Harrison's bill, currently in the House Healthcare committee establishes a long-term funding source that will provide for EMS education in all areas of the state at minimal cost through an insurance assessment. At a time of increasing demand, high municipal taxes and a shrinking workforce this is critical legislation and cannot wait another year. I will be out of town for the next week driving my mother back from southern Texas. In the last couple of days, I have been asked several questions that I think are important for you to consider.

The Health Department has \$375,000 in undistributed training funds. This was news to the EMS Advisory Committee at our February meeting. I believe that the legislation that has been worked on for several years provides permanent solutions for our EMS workforce. The money that was withheld from districts with clear needs illustrates the regulatory hurdles and administrative complexity in the current system. This in no way changes the need for a permanent solution.

The insurance industry lobbyist insisted that the funding mechanism for EMS education was not connected to EMS. This charge on several types of insurance, as proposed, is absolutely connected to EMS delivery. Each year we respond to hundreds of car accidents, calls at businesses for falls and accidents and fire alarms and fires. In the event that a patient is not transported, ambulance services are not reimbursed for the expenses associated with the response. The value of the service provided is far greater than the surcharge for EMS education.

I am available by phone/text while I'm away if you have any questions.

Drew Hazelton

802-579-4576