

CALL TO ACTION

YOUR HELP NEEDED TO PASS IMPORTANT New Jersey EMS LEGISLATION!

BACKGROUND In 2007, the New Jersey Legislature directed the Commissioner of the Department of Health and Senior Services to conduct a study of the New Jersey Emergency Medical Services (EMS) System. The findings of that study indicated the State's enabling EMS legislation and subsequent regulations **require comprehensive overhaul** in order to allow the system, and its various components, to make necessary improvements in medical care and to function in the most optimal and cost effective manner. The study also found that such changes were needed soon to avoid a catastrophic failure of the system.

ISSUE At the direction of the NJ State Department of Health and Senior Services, a **diverse stakeholder group** comprised of the NJ EMS Council and representatives from virtually all EMS component providers was convened. The task force was charged with providing a consensus solutions path to implement the study's recommendations. **New legislation (S-818 and its companion A-2095) was drafted** to incorporate the recommendations and provide for a variety of statutory measures to enhance the scope and quality of the emergency medical services system in New Jersey and to improve its efficiency, streamline its bureaucracy and reduce its overall system cost to patients, taxpayers and the state. The bills were introduced by Senator Joe Vitale (D-Woodbridge) and Assemblyman Herbert Conaway (D-Burlington) in early January, 2010.

The companion bills address the issues raised by the Legislature's mandated Tri-Data EMS study and the recommendations made by the EMS Council's Task Force in the following ways:

1. **Municipal Authority** - New Jersey municipalities are finally granted official authority over EMS in their jurisdiction; the same as for police and fire service.
2. It establishes a needed **minimum level of staffing** of two emergency medical technicians (EMTs) as the standard of care for every ambulance in the state. This would be a uniform standard regarding response to, and treatment and transport of, EMS patients to ensure appropriate care for all of New Jersey's citizens.
3. It establishes, through consolidation of numerous groups, task forces and advisory boards, a governing body – the **Emergency Medical Care Advisory Board**, or EMCAB, which will include industry leaders serving to advise the Department of Health and Senior Services on prehospital issues, medical care and the establishment of provider standards. Expert members from their field will serve without compensation.
4. The **EMS Training Fund will be more inclusive and train all providers**, providing high caliber education in order to meet certification requirements.

5. It **licenses all ambulances** to allow NJ DHSS to utilize the most up-to-date medical protocols and standards for all of our citizens. It will also help with ease of implementation to allow NJ to move forward on aggressive new medical treatments.

6. The EMS Task Force will gain **statutory authority** to continue its great work on issues including disasters and terrorism, and to come together quickly in whatever situations our state and its citizens may face.

YOUR ACTION NEEDED

All EMS providers and supporters are urged to talk with your State Legislators in support of these measures, and ask them to sign on as a co-sponsor of the bill. Feel free to use this information as talking points during your discussions.

You can find contact information for your State legislators at <http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/members/legsearch.asp>

MORE INFORMATION? QUESTIONS?

Call the leadership of your EMS organization. It's important to keep your leadership apprised of any feedback or commitments you receive from your legislative meetings.

Thank you for your efforts to improve the EMS system in the State of New Jersey!

American College of Emergency Physicians – New Jersey Chapter

New Jersey Hospital Association

New Jersey Council of Teaching Hospitals (NJ COTH)

Monmouth-Ocean Hospital Service Corporation (Monoc)

New Jersey Association of Paramedic Programs

New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute