



National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians
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November 3, 2011

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Leahy:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (NAEMT), thank you for introducing the *Public Safety Officers' Benefits Improvements Act of 2011 (S. 1696)*.

NAEMT supports your efforts to improve the Public Safety Officers' Benefit (PSOB) program. We greatly appreciate your ongoing efforts to extend federal death benefit coverage to paramedics and emergency medical technicians (EMTs) who work for a private non-profit emergency medical services (EMS) agency and die in the line of duty, and thank you for including the language of the *Dale Long Emergency Medical Service Providers Protection Act (S. 385)* in this new bill.

Congress established the Public Safety Officer Benefit program to provide assistance to the survivors of police officers, firefighters and paramedics and emergency medical technicians in the event of their death in the line of duty. The benefit, however, currently only applies to those public safety officers employed by a federal, state, or local government entity. Many communities around the U.S. have chosen to have their emergency medical services provided by nongovernmental agencies. Unfortunately, the EMS personnel employed by these services are not currently eligible for death benefits under the PSOB program.

Nongovernmental public safety officers provide identical services to governmental officers and do so daily in the same dangerous environments. The *Dale Long Emergency Medical Service Providers Protection Act* would clarify that the PSOB program covers public safety officers who are employed by non-profit EMS agencies and provide critical emergency medical services to the residents of their community.

Again, thank you for introducing legislation to improve the PSOB program and for your tireless efforts to expand the program to include private non-profit paramedics and EMTs.

Sincerely,

Connie Meyer
President, NAEMT