



National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians  
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November 21, 2011

The Honorable Timothy Walz  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1722 Longworth House Office Building  
District of Columbia 20515-2301

Dear Representative Walz,

On behalf of the membership of the **National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (NAEMT)**, thank you for your sponsorship of H.R. 3144, the *Field EMS Quality, Innovation and Cost-Effectiveness Improvement Act*. We strongly support your efforts and those of Representative Myrick to provide a path toward the vision outlined by the Institute of Medicine (IOM) for the provision of emergency medical services (EMS) in our nation.

Formed in 1975 and more than 32,000 members strong, NAEMT is the nation's only organization solely dedicated to representing the professional interests of all EMS practitioners, including paramedics, emergency medical technicians, first responders and other professionals working in pre-hospital emergency medicine. NAEMT members work in all sectors of EMS, including government service agencies, fire departments, hospital-based ambulance services, private companies, industrial and special operations settings, and in the military.

EMS saves lives and is a unique and critical part of the healthcare delivery system. EMS is a public benefit provided by both governmental and nongovernmental providers that citizens assume will always be there to serve them. The landmark 2006 IOM Report *Emergency Medical Services: At the Crossroads* identified systemic problems that undermine the public trust and reliance upon EMS to protect them in their greatest hour of need.

Today, while fire and police first responders have several targeted federal support programs, there is no dedicated federal funding stream for field EMS responders to ensure their capability to respond to medical emergencies as part of a coordinated emergency care system. In many areas, EMS services are highly fragmented, poorly equipped and insufficiently prepared for day-to-day operations, let alone natural or man-made major disasters. A 2007 GAO report noted that Medicare payments for Field EMS are 6% below the average cost per transport in urban areas and 17% in super rural areas.

H.R. 3144 addresses many of the challenges EMS systems face while trying to fulfill public expectations that all who need EMS can depend upon the highest quality of care and transport to the most appropriate clinical setting. We particularly applaud your efforts to include specific grants for field EMS agencies and EMS education and training. NAEMT fully supports passage of this bill and is willing to assist you in gaining more support for the legislation from your fellow members of Congress.

Again, thank you for your work on behalf of the American people and our members. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact our office at [info@naemt.org](mailto:info@naemt.org) or 1-800-34-NAEMT.

Sincerely,

Connie Meyer  
President, NAEMT