



National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians  
Post Office Box 1400 \* Clinton, Mississippi 39060-1400  
Phone: 800-34-NAEMT or 601-924-7744 \* Fax: 601-924-7325  
Website: [www.NAEMT.org](http://www.NAEMT.org)

September 7, 2011

The Honorable Patty Murray  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Murray:

On behalf of the members of the **National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (NAEMT)** we greatly appreciate you addressing the fiscal challenges facing our nation as a Co-Chair of the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction. As your Committee works to reduce federal expenditures, we ask that you ensure that access to ambulance services is maintained. These services are a critical part of our local and national health care and emergency response system. As part of your efforts, NAEMT urges you to correct the problem facing the Medicare ambulance fee schedule.

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.

The Medicare ambulance fee schedule is chronically underfunded. In May 2007, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) issued a report which found that ambulance service providers are paid on average 6 percent below cost in urban and rural areas and 17 percent below cost in remote or "super rural" areas to provide ambulance services to Medicare patients. Even before the release of the GAO report, Congress recognized this underfunding and provided temporary Medicare ambulance relief every year since 2003. While NAEMT applauds Congress for providing this much-needed relief, the annual threat of funding cuts caused by expiring relief provisions hampers the efforts of ambulance service providers to hire and train a qualified staff of EMS practitioners.

Congress has historically included Medicare ambulance relief as part of a larger bill addressing the Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) and other issues. It is therefore especially critical that ambulance relief be included in a deficit reduction bill if SGR reform is addressed.

Again, thank you for your work on behalf of the American people. 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