NATIONAL EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES INFORMATION SYSTEM (NEMSIS)

April 4, 2012

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Latham
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Susan Collins
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Olver
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Murray and Latham, Ranking Members Collins and Olver:

A comprehensive emergency medical services (EMS) system is essential to providing prompt, quality care to patients with acute injury and medical conditions. Recent studies have shown that effective EMS systems can improve survival from severe injuries by as much as 25 percent. However, even today, these systems vary across the country in their ability to collect patient and system data and use this information to reduce death and disability from emergency events.

To address this issue, the National Association of State EMS Directors joined with its federal partners at the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the Health Resources and Services Administration in 2001 to develop a national repository for EMS data known as the National EMS Information System (NEMSIS) database. Over the past several years, Congress has appropriated funding specifically for NEMSIS and every state and territory has signed a Memorandum of Understanding in support of the program. At present, 35 states use a common data set and submit data to the National EMS database.

The 51 undersigned organizations appreciate your support of this program and urge you to include $2.013 million in the FY 2013 Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development and Related Agencies Appropriations bill for NEMSIS. The program provides numerous benefits to EMS providers and the communities they serve. The information not only improves the quality of care patients receive but also guides the content of continuing medical education programs for EMS staff. EMS administrators also use the data to eliminate costly therapies that do not benefit patients, reallocate resources to reduce response times and refine disaster preparedness policies and procedures.

An FY 2013 appropriation of $2.013 million would increase to 41 the number of states that contribute data to the national NEMSIS database and improve linkage capabilities with other health databases, state trauma registries and electronic medical records. This modest investment will significantly enhance the ability of NEMSIS to reach its full potential nationwide.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. For additional information, please contact Sue Nelson at the American Heart Association at 202-785-7912 or sue.nelson@heart.org.

Sincerely,

Advocates for EMS
American Ambulance Association
American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation
American College of Emergency Physicians

American College of Surgeons
American Heart Association/American Stroke Association
American Medical Response
American Public Health Association
American Sleep Apnea Association
Association of Air Medical Services
Association of Critical Care Transport
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials
Brain Injury Association of America
Center for Leadership, Innovation and Research in EMS
Children's Cardiomyopathy Foundation, Inc.
Citizen CPR Foundation
Emergency Nurses Association
Florida Heart Research Institute
Gold Cross/Mayo Clinic Medical Transport
Heart Rhythm Society
Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy Association
Illinois Association of Fire Protection Districts
Illinois Fire Chiefs Association
Illinois State Ambulance Association
Illinois State Emergency Medical Services Advisory Council
Intermountain Injury Control Research Center
International Association of Fire Chiefs
International Association of Fire Fighters
John Taylor Babbitt Foundation
McLean County Area EMS System
Mended Hearts
National Association of Chronic Disease Directors
National Association of County and City Health Officials
National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians
National Association of State EMS Officials
National Athletic Trainers' Association
National EMS Management Association
National Stroke Association
National Volunteer Fire Council
NENA – the 9-1-1- Association
New Hampshire Association of EMTs
Parent Heart Watch
Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association
Project ADAM
Run for Sarah/Sarah Friend Heart Foundation
SADS Foundation
Saving Young Hearts
Sudden Cardiac Arrest Association
Sudden Cardiac Arrest Foundation
University of Utah School of Medicine
WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease