

Strengthen EMS Act (SEMSA)

Request

Please support H.R. XX, the Strengthen EMS Act (SEMSA) to be introduced by Congressman Larry Bucshon (R-IN) to strengthen EMS as a critical component of our nation's emergency response and healthcare systems through the development of the EMS workforce, integration of EMS in all federal emergency, disaster and healthcare plans and programs, and quality improvements in all aspects of EMS patient care.

Background

All communities throughout the United States should have access to and receive high-quality prehospital emergency medical care as part of a coordinated emergency medical system. EMS serves as a healthcare safety net by providing emergent, urgent and preventive medical care as the first step of the healthcare continuum. Ensuring high-quality and cost-effective EMS requires readiness, preparedness, medical oversight, and innovation through federal, state, and local multijurisdictional collaboration and sufficient resources.

EMS is a critical element of our nation's disaster and mass casualty response infrastructure. EMS, Fire, and Law Enforcement work together to form a triad of critical services in responding to disasters and mass casualties, including bombings, mass shootings, biological and natural disasters, earthquakes, tornadoes, hurricanes, and floods. EMS must be fully integrated into our national emergency preparedness strategy and equipped to ensure that our nation can respond as the public expects and deserves.

Likewise, EMS is an integral component of our nation's ability to respond to public health crises, including outbreaks of infectious diseases. EMS must be fully integrated into our nation's medical preparedness and response strategy and have the training and equipment to achieve zero preventable deaths.

EMS has evolved from a patient transport model to a healthcare service delivery model that provides a variety of targeted medical services to meet the specific needs of their communities. This includes community paramedicine provided by ambulance providers and mobile integrated health care provided collaboratively by a group of healthcare providers in a community. These new delivery models are filling gaps in patient care including preventing recurrent medical episodes through reliable post discharge follow up and chronic disease management. EMS can fill healthcare gaps in communities with cost-effective 24/7 medical care that assesses and navigates patients to the right care, in the right place, and at the right time.

To ensure that EMS is strategically used to support our nation's emergency response and healthcare goals, H.R. XX will:

- Clearly define the EMS workforce and ensure that the workforce is accurately and appropriately classified and counted as a first step in planning and building our nation's EMS workforce capacity.
- Ensure access to programs that offer funds for EMS workforce training and skill development.
- Ensure that EMS is fully integrated into our nation's emergency preparedness and disaster response strategy, and that national EMS stakeholders are full participants in strategy development and implementation.
- Ensure that the EMS workforce receives the necessary training and equipment to fully participate alongside law enforcement and firefighters as a critical component of our nation's disaster and mass casualty response and homeland security infrastructure.
- Ensure that the EMS workforce receives the necessary training and equipment to respond to our nation's public health and medical emergencies whether deliberate, accidental, or natural.
- Ensure that prehospital trauma care is fully integrated into our nation's regionalized trauma infrastructure and poison centers to ensure rapid recognition, treatment and transport of critical patients to tertiary care centers.
- Ensure that EMS is fully integrated in the national health information technology strategy, and that national EMS stakeholders are full participants in strategy development and implementation.
- Promote EMS quality improvement to ensure that patients receive safe and high quality EMS care.

Contact

To become an original cosponsor of the Strengthen EMS Act, please contact Jeffrey Lucas with Congressman Bucshon at jeffrey.lucas@mail.house.gov.