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December 14, 2020

President-Elect Joseph R. Biden
Vice President-Elect Kamala D. Harris
Biden-Harris Transition Team
1401 Constitution Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear President-Elect Biden and Vice President-Elect Harris,

The National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians ([NAEMT](https://www.naemt.org)) appreciates the opportunity to share our insights with your transition team on how to advance emergency medical services (EMS) at the federal level.

Formed in 1975 and more than 72,000 members strong, NAEMT is the nation's only organization that represents and serves the professional interests of all EMS practitioners, including paramedics, emergency medical technicians, emergency medical responders, and other professionals providing prehospital and out-of-hospital emergent, urgent or preventive medical care. Our 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 is a vital component of our nation's healthcare, public health and public safety systems. On any given day, in almost every community in our nation, EMS responds to patient calls for help, 24/7. When fully utilized, EMS plays an essential role as a cost-saving healthcare-ready resource providing unique services and holding a trusted position within communities. To date, there are:

- 1.05 million licensed EMS professionals nationwide including 622,902 Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and 268,420 Paramedics
- Over 19,500 EMS agencies operating 87,781 EMS vehicles including ambulances, helicopters and other aircraft, quick response vehicles, rescue vehicles, fire trucks and all-terrain vehicles
- 42.6 million EMS responses annually
- 30.9 million EMS transports annually

Source: National EMS Assessment 2020

Historically, EMS has not had a designated champion and advocate within the federal government. EMS intersects with several federal agencies which include emergency medical and/or out of hospital patient care in their missions. However, no federal agency is focused on the comprehensive mission of EMS that must take into account preparedness and response, national data collection and evaluation, and funding.

NAEMT humbly seeks your support for the following changes to strengthen EMS in our nation:

1. Create a federally funded EMS office that would operate equivalent to similar federal offices supporting emergency management, healthcare, public health and non-medical first responders. The current arrangement of EMS straddling several agencies within the Administration is not functional nor conducive to serving as a community lifeline during crises. The COVID-19 public health emergency has reinforced the need for a federally funded national EMS office.
2. Establish a direct funding mechanism to support EMS vital services during natural and manmade disasters, public health crises and terrorism. EMS needs the resources, equipment and funding to provide its services efficiently and effectively to communities throughout the nation. Our communities expect EMS to arrive quickly and fully resourced to provide the highest quality medical care for patients in need. But currently federal funding does not meet these expectations.
3. Develop an integrated national EMS database for reporting and evaluation. Significant and rich data regarding patient care, costs, labor and surveillance is not being collected, analyzed or integrated with other national healthcare databases. EMS does not currently have access to high quality data on its own systems, nor access to data from the continuum of emergency patient care.

The EMS industry has worked deliberately to implement cost-saving measures that provide the most appropriate and highest quality patient care. NAEMT, in cooperation with other national EMS stakeholders, has worked closely with the federal government on programs to enable patient transport to appropriate alternate destinations and treat-in-place options to decrease transporting non-emergent patients to hospital emergency departments. We have worked collaboratively with hospital systems to lower readmission rates and fill gaps within the healthcare system through community paramedicine programs. We have engaged the payer community to re-imagine and innovate their approach to covering patient healthcare costs.

We ask your Administration to work in partnership with national EMS organizations to strengthen our nation's emergency medical services. We thank you in advance for your consideration of our needs to better serve our patients and communities and for your continued support of our EMS professionals who make extensive sacrifices to keep our great country healthy and safe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Matt Zavadsky". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Matt Zavadsky, MS-HSA, NREMT
President, NAEMT