



Extend Public Safety Officer Benefit to Include Ambulance and Air Medical Crews

Congress established the Public Safety Officer Benefit to provide assistance to the survivors of police, fire and medics in the event of their death in the line of duty. The benefit, however, currently only applies to those public safety officers employed by a federal, state, and local government entity. The Department of Justice, which administers the program, made an exception after September 11, when five medics employed by nongovernmental ambulance agencies died in the collapse of the World Trade Center.

Since the national tragedy of September 11, Americans have witnessed a renewed appreciation for the important community service of firefighters, police, and medics. Many communities around the U.S. have chosen to have their emergency medical services provided by nongovernmental agencies. Unfortunately, the medics employed by these services are not currently eligible for death benefits under the PSOB program.

Nongovernmental public safety officers provide identical services to governmental officers and do so daily in the same dangerous environments. The *Nongovernmental Emergency Responder Family Protection Act* would clarify that the PSOB program covers nongovernmental public safety officers who provide emergency medical and ground or air ambulance service, fire protection and suppression. These professionals protect and promote the public good of the communities they serve. It is unfair to penalize nongovernmental public safety officers and their families simply because their employer is a nongovernmental agency.

According to the National EMS Memorial Service, approximately 400 medics have died in the line of duty since 1993. While the totals differ significantly from year to year, the average number of medic deaths per year is 25 with about half of those being employed by nongovernmental agencies. As of October 1, 2008, the death benefit is \$315,746. To expand the benefit based on an average of 12 line-of-duty nongovernmental medic deaths would cost approximately \$3.79 million a year.

Please contact any of the associations listed below for more information.

Association of Air Medical Services
526 King Street, Suite 415
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-3143
(703) 836-8732
(703) 836-8920 Fax

American Ambulance Association
8400 Westpark Drive, 2nd Floor
McLean, VA 22102
(703) 610-9018
(703)610-9005 Fax

**National Association of Emergency
Medical Technicians**
PO Box 1400 Clinton, MS 39060-1400
1-800-34-NAEMT

Supporting State & Regional Organizations:



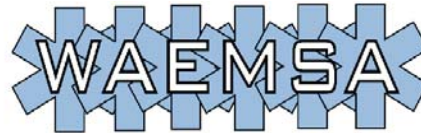
Kansas EMS Association (KEMSA)



Representing Minnesota's EMS Professionals



Arkansas EMT Association



Wyoming Ambulance and Emergency Medical Services Association



Mountain Rescue Association



Michigan Association of Ambulance Services



Louisiana Rural Ambulance Alliance