

*National Association of State EMS Officials  
Advocates for EMS Washington Update*



# Cornerstone Government Affairs



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# Mission



A voice in Washington for EMS. Educate decision makers regarding the functions and needs of EMS systems.

Seek increased Federal support for *all components* of EMS, whether fire-based, private, third service or volunteer.

# Organizational Sponsors

5 Years of Growth – Thank You to our Members!



## Board of Directors

National Association of EMS Physicians  
National Association of State EMS Officials  
National Association of EMTs  
National Association of EMS Educators

## Benefactor Founding Member

GM OnStar  
Medtronic  
Phillips

## Organizational Members

24-7 EMS  
Acadian Ambulance Service  
American College of Emergency Physicians  
American Ambulance Association  
American College of Surgeons  
American Heart Association  
American Medical Response  
Association for Air Medical Services  
Brain Trauma Foundation  
EMS & Trauma Systems Section  
EMS Association of Colorado

## Organizational Members (cont.)

Emergency Nurses Association  
Gold Cross/Mayo Medical Transport  
Idaho EMS Bureau  
Iowa EMS Association  
International Association of Flight Paramedics  
LifeFlight Eagle  
Med-Media, Inc.  
Metropolitan Ambulance Services Trust  
(MAST Ambulance)  
Med-Media, Inc.  
Minnesota EMS Regulatory Board  
Missouri Emergency Medical Service Assn.  
National EMS Management Association  
National Academies of Emergency Dispatch  
National Council of State EMS Training Coordinators  
National Registry of EMTs  
National Council of State EMS Training Coordinators  
North American EMS Employee Organization Network  
Rural/Metro Corporation  
Tri-State Ambulance

# Advocates Structure



- Leadership provided by Board of Directors, with input and support of member organization representatives.
- Raise awareness of EMS issues in Congress and Executive agencies.
- Focus on specific Federal legislation or program funding.
- Monthly calls with Board and general membership
- Website posting of issue papers, reports, action alerts, supplemented by email communication on issues.

# Overview



- Celebrating 5 Year of Accomplishments and Growth
  - Federal Interagency Committee on EMS
  - Homeland Security Funding
  - NHTSA EMS funding - NEMSIS
  - HHS funding
  - Formation of Congressional EMS Caucus
  - Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act
  - ◆ Future Activities

# Advocates for EMS' Top Priorities for FY 2008



- 1) National Emergency Medical Services Information System (NEMSIS) funding
- 2) DHS First Responder Funding
- 3) Ryan White Care Act Language
- 4) Support passage of H.R. 3822, the extension of benefits to nongovernmental employees and volunteers of a fire department, ground or air ambulance service or first responder who dies in the line of duty
- 5) Recruit Members for the EMS Caucus

# What has the 2<sup>nd</sup> session of the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress accomplished?



- Passage of the Farm Bill
- We are 1/3-1/2 way through the appropriations process
- Working on an extension of some Medicare payments (doc payment fix, among others)
- Election year politics will prevent much from passing

# It's been a busy 6 months for Advocates!



- February – the President released his Budget proposing significant cuts to first responder grants at DHS and HHS programs that fund EMS. Advocates issued a press release denouncing the cuts to vital programs.
- S. 999, the Stroke Treatment and Ongoing Prevention (STOP Stroke) Act was passed by the Senate Health, Education, Labor & Pensions Committee.

# It's been a busy 6 months for Advocates!



- **The STOP Stroke Act would:**
  - Help raise public awareness about stroke;
  - Provide critical resources to implement stroke care systems that improve the prevention, treatment and rehabilitation of stroke;
  - Establish a clearinghouse to collect data and share best practices; and
  - Offer medical professional development programs in new stroke therapies
- **The bill is now before the full Senate for consideration.**

# AEMS Activities thus far in '08



- **Advocates for EMS held its first EMS Policy Summit at the EMS Today Conference in Baltimore.**
  - Summit highlights include Dr. Jeff Runge as the keynote speaker;
  - A session on how to advocate;
  - A roundtable discussion featuring federal partners from NHTSA, HHS (including ASPR, CDC & HRSA) and DHS (OHA and US Fire Administration); and
  - A discussion with panelists on how those at the federal level could communicate in a more effective manner with EMS providers.
  - Overall the event was a huge success and will be replicated.

# AEMS Activities thus far in '08



- **Farm Bill**

AEMS and some of its members worked to have a Rural Firefighter and EMS Grant Program included in the bill. The grant program authorizes up to \$30 million per year for fiscal years 2008-2012 for recruitment, retention, education and training, equipment and vehicles, among other things.

Congress will have to appropriate money for the program before any entities can apply for the grants. The Farm Bill passed too late in the year for to lobby for funding for the program. Should Advocates or other organizations wish to ask for funding for the program, efforts will have to being early next year.

# AEMS EMS Week Activities



- **EMS Week Activities**

- Advocates worked with the National EMS Memorial Bike Ride to coordinate an event on Capitol Hill to honor those EMS providers who died in the line of duty and to promote H.R. 3822.
- Hosted a briefing for congressional staff on the future of EMS communications. Kevin McGinnis was the featured speaker.

# House DHS Appropriations



- A report that was issued in May 2008, according to DHS, EMS continues to receive less than 4% of the first responder grant funding available in FY 2005 from programs where EMS is eligible.

Report Language included in the FY 2009 DHS Appropriations Bill (identical to last FY 08 conference report language)

## **Emergency Medical Services**

- ***FEMA is directed, in conjunction with the Office of Health Affairs, to report to the Committee regarding the current state of disaster preparedness capabilities of emergency medical services providers and the capabilities required to meet future preparedness goals. This report is due no later than six months after the enactment of this Act and shall include an analysis of the gap between current and target capabilities. FEMA is directed to include in its grants guidance, language requiring State and local governments to include EMS providers in their Statewide Homeland Security Plans as well as their UASI plans. If a State provides no funding to EMS providers, the State should justify lack of funding through demonstrating related targeted capabilities have been met or identify other pressing priorities.***



# House DHS Appropriations Other Report Language of Interest

## First Responder Readiness

- ***The Committee is concerned about the nation's ability to respond to all disasters in U.S. territories, especially disasters that offer no warning. FEMA is directed to analyze the response capabilities of the U.S. territories, including the level of readiness of first responders and the availability of adequate training programs. FEMA shall report to the Committee on the results of this analysis within six months after the enactment of this Act. The Committee also directs FEMA to examine the utility of additional sites for all-hazard first responder training and report to the Committee on its findings no later than February 16, 2009.***

# Senate DHS Report Language



**“The Committee is concerned that EMS is not considered an equal partner among the first responder community and encourages FEMA to require State and local governments to include EMS representatives in planning efforts.”**

# 16 States Use Their CDC Prevent Block Funding for EMS



California	Montana
Connecticut	Nebraska
Georgia	New Jersey
Iowa	New Mexico
Louisiana	Oregon
Massachusetts	Vermont
Michigan	Wisconsin
Missouri	Wyoming

The President proposed to eliminate the CDC Prevention Block Grant. The FY 08 Omnibus Appropriations bill level-funded the program at \$99 million. However, a 1.7% across the board cut was applied to all programs funded at HHS.

\$100 million was included in the FY 09 House Labor-HHS Subcommittee passed appropriations bill.

# Department of Transportation



## National Emergency Medical Services Information System (NEMSIS)

- In FY 2008 AEMS successfully advocated for an additional \$750,000 under the National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration (NHTSA) appropriation to continue development of the NEMSIS.

# IOM Reports – What has the Hill focused on?



- The House Ways & Means Committee and the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee held hearings on the IOM reports on Emergency Care in 2007.
- The Committees focused on the issue of boarding, ED overcrowding, diversion and uncompensated care.
- The House Government Reform and Oversight Committee held a hearing on the implementation of the IOM's recommendations in June of 2007 focusing on overcrowding/boarding and diversion and also this Spring with a Homeland Security spin. The focus was largely on the Administration's Medicaid regulations and its impact on homeland security preparedness.
- Dr. Bob O'Connor, President of Advocates of EMS, testified at the hearing in 2007.

# Other EMS-related legislation that has been introduced



- In late July of 2007, Senator Barack Obama introduced S. 1873, the Improving Emergency Medical Care and Response Act of 2007. Congressman Henry Waxman introduced a similar measure in the House, H.R. 3173.
- The legislation builds on recommendations from the IOM reports and establish regionalization demonstration programs that will help State EMS offices and their partners develop regionalized systems that provide prompt, quality care through the development and improvement of an EMS system.
- The measures include a provision that allows for improved support for emergency medical research through various federal agencies.

## Other EMS-related legislation that has been introduced



- H.R. 2464, which would reauthorize the EMSC program was introduced by Congressman Matheson (D-UT) and Peter King (R-NY) has been introduced as a companion to S. 60, the Wakefield Act, introduced by Sen. Inouye (D-HI) and Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT).
- The measure passed the House and has been referred to the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee for further consideration.
- Not much will happen in the Senate HELP Committee due to Senator Kennedy's condition. As of right now, he is expected to return in September.

# EMS Caucus



Advocates has been working to establish an EMS Caucus on Capitol Hill.

We have secured our EMS Caucus Co-Chairs:

Congressman Dutch Ruppersberger (D-MD)

Congressman Tim Walz (D-MN)

Congressman Charles Boustany (R-LA)

A Dear Colleague has been circulated in the House asking representatives to join the EMS Caucus. Thus far the following members have joined the Caucus:

Loebsack (IA), Ramstad (MN), Altmire (PA) and Carney (PA)

# What Will Happen in '08? Not much....



- Presidential politics and an election year in which many seats in Congress will be in play will prevent Congress from passing larger pieces of legislation. Must passes in '08 include:
  - Physician fee schedule fix and the reauthorization of the Animal Drug User Fee Act are the only “must pass” pieces of legislation.
  - Appropriations bills could roll over into 2009 if the Democrats want to avoid another showdown with President Bush over program funding levels.

# Advocates in 2008



- Continue to recruit individual and organizational members to assist with educating Congressional members and staff about the EMS mission and needs;
- Continue to strengthen relationships with Federal officials with EMS oversight such as HHS, DHS and NHTSA;
- Continue work towards the formation of a Congressional EMS Caucus (identifying co-chairs and members to join the Caucus)

# Advocates in 2008



- Continue to promote the EMS message and recruit more EMS community representatives to the advocacy to cause to ensure that EMS is included in important Federal and state level policy decisions on an equal basis with police and fire;
- Advocating for increased funding to support EMS system infrastructure and terrorism/disaster response; and
- Continue efforts to have a robust national EMS data collection, reporting and analysis system.

# How AEMS Can Help You



Visit [www.AdvocatesForEMS.org](http://www.AdvocatesForEMS.org) to:

- Learn the EMS issues and specific requests
- Identify your Congressman or Senator
- Get guidance on how to do an effective office visit
- Download issue papers to use in office visits
- Download scripts for phone calls

# Questions?



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