



To: Special Committee on Organization of Public Health Boards

600 Broadway, Suite 200
Kansas City, MO 64105-1659

From: MARCER

RE: Kansas Board of Emergency Medical Services

Date: December 7, 2016

Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) is the bi-state council of local governments serving nine area counties in the KS/MO area of Kansas City. MARC has a committee regarding emergency medical services, (MARCER) consisting of over 35 area EMS agencies and 20 hospitals which collaborate through MARCER for various issues such as communications, disaster planning, hospital diversion, TCD, group purchasing and numerous policy initiatives.

MARCER was represented at the recent hearing held on 12/6/16 at the State Capitol. We have considered general comments presented in the state consulting report and discussed the conceptual proposal with other stakeholder groups.

MARCER respects the serious challenges presented by the Kansas budget but we do not think that the proposal as is currently outlined will demonstrate any substantial savings and will create additional challenges for the provision of quality Emergency Medical Services in Kansas.

Unlike many of the health care programs which you are considering to combine under one umbrella agency, citizens have little to no ability to select which ambulance service will provide them service during a time of crisis. An individual can select their doctor, barber, funeral home, hearing aid specialist etc., but during an emergency the individual has no choice as to the ambulance service that will attend to their crisis.

This creates a significant obligation on the "system" to make sure that the ambulance is staffed with well trained personnel, is well equipped and has good clinical and management processes to provide quality services. The state has a heightened responsibility to assure that the ambulance is properly equipped, personnel are assigned, the staff is well trained, the physician medical director is providing proper oversight, etc.

Due to this environment, it is critical that the State of Kansas provide qualified personnel to inspect ambulances, review training programs, review license issues, conduct investigations etc. Typically the EMS staff conducting the ambulance inspections is also engaged with issues regarding the service's clinical protocols, personnel licensure, and training requirements.

To utilize general function state employees with no EMS background or qualifications to conduct the front-line functions will have a negative impact on the quality of EMS services provided in Kansas by seriously weakening the technical oversight which the state currently provides.

MARCER respects that certain functions that are support in nature, such as human resources, IT, accounting, and other back-office support could be combined in some situations for some savings to the state, but to utilize general purpose personnel instead of EMS specific staff for the critical functions of the state EMS regulatory agency is not in the best interests of the citizens.

Sincerely,

Brad Mason - Chair, MARCER

