



THE HENNEPIN COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF PARAMEDICS AND EMTs
1325 WINTER ST, SUITE 102. MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55413

March 14, 2023

Chair Moller and members of the Health Finance and Policy Committee,

My name is Shane Hallow, I am the president of the Hennepin County Association of Paramedics and EMTs (HCAPE), which is the exclusive representative of the paramedics and dispatchers of Hennepin EMS. In addition to my union position, I have worked as a full-time paramedic for Hennepin EMS since 2013. I am writing to you, on behalf of HCAPE, to express my strong opposition to HF 2736/SF 2691.

I want to take a moment to acknowledge our history within public safety and prehospital emergency care. Our members have provided 911 ambulance response and dispatching since the inception of EMS in Minnesota. We have responded to nearly every major incident in the state, including the 35W bridge collapse, civil unrest following the murder of George Floyd, and the COVID-19 pandemic. We have honorably performed these duties because we know the residents of Minnesota are counting on us to be there on their worst day. Our members provide world class care and have led the nation in pre-hospital care and patient outcomes for many decades.

Over the last several years, we have seen unprecedented circumstances including significant call volume increases which have put a strain on our EMS system and those who selflessly serve in this profession. It is highly unfortunate that advocates of HF 2736/SF 2691 have failed to also advocate for increased funding and workforce capacity for the EMS system and would prefer to restructure the system to serve their own interests—namely complete agency over EMS services while obviously misunderstanding the actual needs of the EMS system in Minnesota.

HF 2761 and SF 2691 do not solve any problems we are facing in EMS and should be rejected. Several bills have been introduced which support emergency medical services throughout the state and ease the challenges we are facing. I ask that you support the EMS system by supporting these bills, HF 165/SF 1594, HF 193/SF 471, HF 643/SF 595, HF 2146/, HF 141/SF 150, HF 449/SF 2821.

Current legislation keeps Minnesotans safe and enshrines health equity. EMS services across the State of Minnesota need workforce development programs, increased funding, and support from the State of Minnesota to solve critical funding and staffing issues, not a bill that aims to reform and destroy the current system. I encourage you to focus on solving the critical funding and staffing issues faced by Minnesota's EMS providers.

Respectfully,

Shane Hallow, President

Hennepin County Association of Paramedics and EMTs