



January 24, 2021

Dear Members of the Health Finance and Policy Committee,

I am writing you to express my concerns with the current and long standing Emergency Medical Service system. I am the Fire Chief for the City of Faribault in rural Minnesota. Our fire department is a combination department which means we have full-time staff and paid-on-call staff. All of our full-time staff and many of our paid-on-call staff are medically trained and we respond to multiple medical calls a day. We do not transport as we meet a private ambulance service at the scene.

For many years we have been concerned about the staffing levels at which the private ambulance service maintains. As a fire department, we are committed to ensuring the people of our response area receive prompt service no matter what the emergency is and when it happens. I believe that ambulance managers feel the same but are in a system that makes that a challenge. We, as a City, have contemplated many times the taking over of the ambulance service but have found out that we cannot as the ambulance service "owns" the PSA.

Not having a say in the service level to our community is costing us extra money as a City and more importantly it is putting people at risk. Almost every day we respond to a medical call that we end up waiting for an ambulance from another town to respond to. That delays advanced medical care for the patient, ties up resources for a longer than necessary time, and in some cases we have to call back firefighters on overtime to cover the station incase another emergency call comes in.

I will end this letter with this; "A member of the public in the Faribault Fire response area will never have to hear from a dispatcher that the fire truck responding to their emergency is coming from another town" yet almost every day patients and responders hear that about the ambulance.

Sincerely,

Chief Dustin Dienst

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