



# Victoria Fire Department

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March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023

The Honorable Tina Liebling  
Chair, Health Finance & Policy Committee  
477 State Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Chair Liebling and Health Finance & Policy Committee Members,

I am the Fire Chief for the City of Victoria and lead team of incredibly talented and compassionate individuals who serve the needs of our community when called upon. Much of the critical work that these individuals perform every day is related to providing emergency medical services to our community until an advanced care ambulance can arrive and provide for transport to a local hospital. I have seen drastic changes in the demands placed on local fire departments over my 22-year career which is why I am writing asking for your support of HF2736. Throughout all this change, one thing that has remained consistent is the outdated and antiquated EMS laws that exist in Minnesota.

Many of the laws that regulate Emergency Medical Services were put into place in the 1980's and have not been updated since. These laws include the Primary Service Areas (PSA's) that establish permanent service areas to ambulance providers with no direct accountability to the local unit of government, the sale or transfer of service area to other providers, and lack of oversight from the state's Emergency Medical Services Regulatory Board (EMSRB).

To further support some of the challenges facing our EMS system, a 2022 report released by the Minnesota Office of the Legislative Auditor (OLA) made several crucial recommendations to improve the current EMS system in the state. These recommendations include restructuring how PSA's are created, modified, overseen, licensing renewal changes, enacting performance standards, and improving sustainability of the EMS system in the state through pilot programs.

I am seeking your support to assist in reforming our outdated EMS laws to ensure that members of our communities receive the best possible service during their time of need. The fire service is vested in service excellence, and we can improve that service by supporting the five initiatives below and HF2736.

1. Modify existing Primary Service Areas (PSA's) to correspond with local governing units ("LGU") lines.
2. Require performance standards be set during the license renewal process.
3. Quality assurance metrics reviewed over that quarter.
4. Consistent definitions of "response time" and "quality of care".
5. Require a quarterly report to be delivered to the local units of government with oversight authority of the EMS in that PSA.

Thank you for your consideration of HF2736.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew Heger", written in a cursive style.

Fire Chief  
Andrew Heger