

March 14, 2023

Chair Liebling and members of the committee,

Emergency medical response and maintaining public safety are core services that our cities administer every day. To better provide for our residents we urge you to approve HF2736 which would allow voices from the local level to be included in decision-making and allow local government recipients of emergency medical services (EMS) to join in managing those services.

In the current Primary Service Area (PSA) structure, cities and other local units of government don't have a seat at the decision-making table. We don't have the authority to set standards or goals around important metrics on service reliability; types of services delivered; expectations of how those services are delivered; and types of data that are collected and distributed. As drafted, HF2736 corrects this imbalance. We urge the committee to include our voice alongside those already at the regulatory table, including experts from the healthcare field, county governments and ambulance contractors.


Over the course of the past several months our fire departments have been gathering data on response times. That initial data shows an unacceptable delay in the time it takes for an ambulance to arrive on scene. In more than half of the calls, crews are experiencing a wait time of greater than 10 minutes for an ambulance to arrive. Some of those calls are critical incidents where delays could result in potential negative effects for survival or for long-term health and wellness of patients.

In addition to the anguish and stress experienced by patients who are left waiting, these delays have a real, negative impact on our ability to respond to other emergencies in our communities. There is a high likelihood of receiving multiple, competing 911 calls involving life safety concerns.

The PSA statute has not been substantially updated since 1979. To put this in perspective, since this statute was last touched more than 40 years ago, the internet, email and telehealth have all been invented. As you have seen in the 2022 Legislative Auditor's report, the ability to alter PSAs and additional oversight at the state level for the Emergency Medical Services Review Board are both recommended. The report further encouraged the Legislature to take the actions outlined in this bill which will require regular review of the PSAs in partnership with local governments.

Thank you for taking the time to hold a hearing on this important issue. Delivering public safety services is the most basic tenet of government and requires that we work creatively and collaboratively to meet people's needs. We support HF2736 and ask that you take the necessary steps to move it forward in the 2023 legislative session.

Sincerely,



Ron Case
Mayor of Eden Prairie



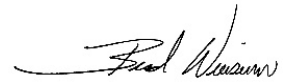
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