

Representative Adam Wool

Alaska State Legislature • District 5 Fairbanks



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Sponsor Statement

House Bill 176 Emergency Medical Transport

“An Act relating to medical assistance reimbursement for emergency medical transportation services; and providing for an effective date.”

Emergency Medical Transport refers to the emergency transportation of patients by ground, water, or air. As it currently stands, Alaska’s emergency medical service (EMS) providers incur considerable additional uncompensated costs when providing services to Medicaid beneficiaries.

Reimbursement for emergency medical transportation services occurs when the providers submit a billing to the state Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) for eligible services provided. The department then reimburses the provider using the established Medicaid methodology and rate and submits documentation supporting the payment of the federal financial participation (FFP) to Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Once it is approved, the department receives reimbursement for the FFP from CMS that amounts to the appropriate federal assistance percentage (FMAP).

By enacting this legislation along with an amendment to the state Medicaid plan, public EMS providers are eligible to access enhanced federal funding for emergency transportation of Medicaid patients. The use of transfers is clearly authorized in federal statute and is both legal and useful. CMS also provides reimbursement for the administrative costs of this program by up to twenty percent of the cost of transport.

HB 176 would allow EMS providers around the state to collect underfunded costs, which provides a financial boon to those organizations and communities. HB 176 has widespread support throughout the state. This bill helps our local communities receive payments to more effectively cover the cost of the services they provide.