

Mr. Chairman,

I am emailing you today in support of the recently issued Executive Order 125. This EO would transfer the responsibilities of the Governor's Advisory Council on EMS (ACEMS) to the DOH Commissioner's Office.

I was appointed to ACEMS a few years ago and am also a member of three of the Sub-Committees of ACEMS - Medical Direction Committee, Training Committee and EMS for Children (EMSC). As a 40 year Alaska EMS Provider, past Director of Interior Region EMS Council and an EMS administrator with a Fire Department, I am very familiar with the purpose of ACEMS and its role in developing a viable and sustainable EMS system in Alaska. However, this Council was originally chartered in 1977 to establish an EMS system and to help guide decisions on EMS with recommendations to the Governor. The membership of ACEMS was dictated in Statute and was meant to include the primary stakeholders of the time. This process worked well in 1977 when EMS was in its infancy, however Alaska EMS now needs a more dynamic and flexible advisory committee. EMS is changing rapidly from its grassroots of 50 years ago and the State needs an advisory committee that can easily add to its membership stakeholders that can represent this changing environment, such as Mobile Integrated Health or Air Medical. Changing Statute is a long and arduous task, making ACEMS membership difficult to change to add the current representative needs of EMS. To add to the concern, there have been times that the Boards and Commissions has added members to ACEMS that have little or no experience with EMS or understand the issues being brought to the Council. With the DOH Commissioners Office and its close relationship with the Office of EMS, members may be better vetted for the job they are being appointed to do.

Another issue is effective and rapid communications between the Commissioner's office and EMS stakeholders. ACEMS reports to the Governor's office, who passes recommendations on to the Commissioner's Office and then on to the Office of EMS under the Section of Rural and Community Healthcare Services. An advisory committee working directly under the Commissioner's Office would allow for quick and direct communications with the Office of EMS and would allow the Office of EMS to work directly with an EMS Advisory Committee.

I believe the intent of the EO is to streamline the process and to have an EMS Advisory Committee made of stakeholders in ALL areas of EMS to continue advising the Commissioner and OEMS. One that is dynamic, nimble and able to adapt to the changing EMS environment. This flexibility is essential if we are going to reach the goal of viable and sustainable EMS in Alaska.

As the Health and Social Services Committee evaluates EO 125, I hope you will take my recommendation to allow it to go into effect.

Thank you for your time,

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