

Testimony on HB 1597
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Senate Human Services Committee
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Chair Lee and members of the Senate Human Services Committee, my name is Bill Kalanek and I'm here on behalf of the ND EMS Association to offer support the HB 1597.

Each biennium the legislature is tasked with revisiting the formula by which the Rural EMS Assistance Grant is distributed. The latest incarnation is HB 1597. There are a few key changes with the formula for the upcoming biennium.

1. Increased average cost of a run to \$2,023.00
2. Increased reimbursement per run to \$795.00
3. Step down for low volume services.
4. Step down for high volume services. (With adoption of amendment)
5. Change in upper threshold to 800 runs per year.

The changes in the formula will allow the department to "step down" the low volume services by mitigating decreases over the next biennium. This approach will prevent low volume services from simply losing the grant in favor of them being limited to a 50 percent decrease in each of the next two years.

On the flip-side of the equation, those services who will go over the 800 run threshold and no longer qualify will be stepped down in the same fashion by reductions being limited to 50 percent in each of the next 2 years.

Proposed Amendments to HB 1597

SECTION 1. EXEMPTION - AMBULANCE SERVICE OPERATION FUNDING DISTRIBUTION.

Notwithstanding section 23-46-04 relating to state financial assistance for emergency medical services, during the biennium beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2027, the department of health and human services, in consultation with the emergency medical services advisory council, shall provide state financial assistance to each eligible ambulance service operation pursuant to the following calculation:

1. The minimum reasonable budget for each operation must be determined by adding the product of the operation's average number of runs for the two most recent calendar years multiplied by the cost of a run. The cost of a run for this biennium is two thousand twenty-three dollars. If the average runs multiplied by the cost of a run equals less than one hundred twenty-five thousand dollars, the minimum reasonable budget for that ambulance service is one hundred twenty-five thousand dollars. The grant amount shall be the lessor of:

- a. The calculation in subsection 2; or
- b. The cost of a run multiplied by the average runs.

4. The maximum reimbursement for a run is two thousand twenty-three dollars. For grant amounts distributed through June 30, 2026~~7~~, the minimum total grant calculation for each operation, after accounting for the deductions in subsection 2, must be at least fifty percent of the previous year's grant amount, but not more than the amount calculated in subsection 1.

5. For grant amounts distributed through June 30, 2027, the minimum total grant calculation for each operation, notwithstanding subsection 6, must be at least fifty percent of the previous year's grant amount.

Renumber accordingly