



January 19th, 2025

House Human Services Committee
600 East Boulevard Avenue
Bismarck, ND 58505

RE: Opposition to HB 1394

Chairman Ruby & Committee Members,

Please accept this letter as opposition to HB 1394 as presented to the legislature. There is a discrepancy between the wording of NDCC 23-27-01 and current practices by the HHS Department's EMS Unit. This bill stands to eliminate the practice of operating ambulance substations by enacting a sunset date for licensure and does not settle the existing discrepancy.

The City of Williston Fire Department [WFD] is a licensed ambulance service operating out of three stations, a headquarters station, and two additional stations. The HHS Department has never required the WFD to obtain substation licenses for our additional stations. The EMS Unit considers our operation a single ambulance service that operates out of multiple stations rather than an ambulance service that operates substations. NDCC 23-27-01 does not provide this definition. Arguably, the WFD and several other organizations should obtain substation licenses, but the EMS Unit does not require them under current operating practices.

The WFD fears that this discrepancy in definition could result in an unforeseen change in interpretation in the future. If HB 1394 is enacted as currently worded, the City of Williston could be forced to close EMS operations at two stations. The WFD has strategically deployed these resources to meet the needs of our community and ensure quick and reliable ambulance response to the 1,100 square miles of our response district.

Subsections 3 and 4 are confusing and contradictory as they are written. Adding a sunset date without an attempt to adequately define the difference between an ambulance substation and an ambulance service with multiple stations creates more significant confusion. This bill aims to address challenges with the transferability of licenses and poor-performing ambulance substations. Rather than eliminating the ability for an ambulance service to deploy, stage, or house resources accordingly throughout a response district, we recommend replacing this

sunset date with a provision that requires minimum response standards to be met. We also recommend removing licensure requirements for substations due to this requirement not being adequately defined and equally enforced throughout the state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matt Clark', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Matthew Clark, Fire Chief
City of Williston Fire Department
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Recommendation #1

Do not edit subsections 3 and 4. Add two new subsections stating:

5. The Department of Health and Human Services shall not issue any new substation ambulance services operations licenses pursuant to subsections 3 and 4. Current substation licenses shall be maintained and renewed, provided they are continuously licensed. Subsections 3 and 4 are repealed upon report from the Department of Health and Human Services when no active substation licenses exist.

6. An emergency medical services operation may operate one or more stations under a single license provided that:

- a. The emergency medical services operation designates a headquarters station and all other stations during the licensure process
- b. The emergency medical service operation has a response plan in place to provide for reliable response from each station

Recommendation #2

Remove the sunset date and re-engage through separate legislation to address subsections 3 and 4 discrepancies.

Recommendation #3

Replace subsections 3 and 4 with:

3. An emergency medical services operation may operate one or more substations under a single license provided that:

- a. The emergency medical services operation designates a headquarters station;
- b. The substation has a designated response area and is either dispatched directly by a public safety answering point or an internal dispatching procedure approved by the department that does not allow for significant delays;
- c. The dispatching procedure is provided by the same public safety answering point or internal dispatching process for the headquarters station and all substations.
- d. The emergency medical services operation has a standards of cover plan that is approved by the department upon licensure that includes;
 1. Designated sub-response area within the licensed emergency medical services operations designated response area
 2. Emergency response performance requirements
 3. Dispatching procedure for when service is not available

e. The substation cannot act as a substation for multiple emergency medical services operations.

Recommendation #4

Replace subsection 3 with:

3. Notwithstanding subsection 4, an emergency medical services operation may operate multiple locations within its designated area. These locations are not considered substations, as outlined in subsection 4.