



Testimony
House Bill 1394
House Human Services Committee
Monday, January 20, 2025
North Dakota Emergency Medical Services Association

Good afternoon, Chairman Ruby and members of the committee. My name is Adam Parker, I represent the North Dakota Emergency Medical Services Association. The Association supports HB 1322.

The bill accomplishes two things. First, it makes ambulance licenses transferable. Second, it addresses issues relating to substations.

Currently, ambulance service licenses in North Dakota are non-transferable. This has created issues when ambulance services are sold, or when ambulance districts are created, and the ambulance service and district decide to consolidate into one entity. Allowing ambulance licenses to be transferable, subject to the approval of the department, will allow for a more seamless process when these situations arise.

Next, substations are generally former ambulance services that can no longer provide full-time coverage. In response, they partner with a neighboring ambulance service and become a substation. They maintain the ambulance service's originally assigned service area, and the headquarters ambulance service is required to cover the area when the substation is not available.

This plan was seen as a way to address issues within EMS; however, even those involved in the original planning of the substation model agree it did not materialize as expected. Furthermore, having part-time ambulance services has resulted in issues with reliability when ambulance services do not respond as expected.

Our proposed amendment, which further clarifies the language regarding ambulance locations and substations, will close the door to any new substations while allowing existing substations to continue for the time being. Then issues with current substations can be addressed through rulemaking which can be carefully tailored to not jeopardize the sustainability of the headquarters ambulance service while ensuring reliability of the substation ambulance service.

It is important to have a reliable EMS system that is proactive, rather than reactive. This bill helps to strengthen the reliability of the EMS system in North Dakota.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

~~Except as otherwise provided under subsection 4, an~~ An emergency medical services operator operation must be separately licensed for each of its designated service areas, the operator's emergency medical services operations and an operation that is headquartered from a separate location must be considered a separate operation. Under this subsection, an operation ~~with a single headquarters site~~ may dispatch position vehicles and emergency medical services personnel ~~from at~~ more than one location within the emergency medical service operations designated service area. ~~if calls requesting services are received and orders for vehicle dispatch are made at the single headquarters site.~~

4. Notwithstanding subsection 3, an operator of an emergency medical services operation may operate one or more substation ambulance services operations under a single license if:

a. The substation ambulance services operation was designated before December 31, 2024, and remains continuously designated;

ba. The headquarters ambulance services operation is not a substation ambulance services operation of another emergency medical services operation;

cb. The substation ambulance services operation area borders the headquarters ambulance services operation area or borders another substation of the headquarters ambulance services operation;

de. The headquarters ambulance services operation and the substation ambulance services operation are dispatched by the same entity; and

ed. The operator of the emergency medical services operation pays a license fee for each of its substation ambulance services operations.

"Substation ambulance service" means an ambulance station that has its own service area designated by the department and is not individually licensed as an emergency medical service operation.