

*March 8, 2025*

To the Honorable Members of the North Dakota Legislative Assembly,

As a member of the LaMoure City Council I am contacting you on behalf of the City of LaMoure and I am compelled to voice my opposition to Senate Bill 2033, which establishes a "distressed ambulance service program" with a continuing appropriation and legislative oversight. While I recognize the importance of supporting ambulance services—especially in our rural areas—I believe this bill represents an overreach by the state that undermines local authority, misallocates resources, and fails to address the real challenges facing our emergency medical services

From a city standpoint, one of my primary concerns is the erosion of local control. Our city, like many others, has worked hard to manage and sustain our ambulance services through local taxes, volunteer efforts, and partnerships tailored to our community's unique needs. SB 2033's top-down approach—designating "distressed" services and funneling state funds—threatens to bypass the expertise and decision-making of local officials who understand our operational realities. Instead of empowering cities and counties to innovate, this bill risks creating a one-size-fits-all program that may not align with the specific demands of local communities.

Economically, SB2033 is a red flag. Our city budget is already a delicate balancing act—funding schools, maintaining infrastructure, and supporting small businesses while keeping taxes manageable. Any new costs or redirected resources this bill might impose would hit us hard

Finally, I question the practicality of this proposal. Identifying "distressed" ambulance services sounds noble, but the criteria remain vague. SB 2033 does little to address the root causes of distress—EMS workforce shortages, inadequate reimbursement rates, or rising operational costs. Our city needs sustainable solutions, not a state program that might prop up struggling services today only to see them falter again tomorrow.

I respectfully urge you to vote against SB 2033. North Dakota's cities and towns are best equipped to manage our ambulance services with targeted support—like grants for training or equipment—rather than a broad, state-driven initiative that risks inefficiency and overreach. Let's work together on policies that respect local governance and deliver real, lasting results for all our communities.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,  
Trigg Baker  
City Council Member  
LaMoure, North Dakota

