2025 HOUSE HUMAN SERVICES

HB 1597

2025 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Human Services Committee
Pioneer Room, State Capitol

HB 1597
2/3/2025

A BILL for an Act to provide an exemption; and to provide for the distribution of state financial assistance to eligible ambulance service operations.

2:32 p.m. Chairman M. Ruby opened the hearing.

Members Present: Chairman M. Ruby, Vice-Chairman Frelich, Representatives Anderson, Bolinske, Davis, Dobervich, Fegley, Hendrix, Kiefert, Rios, Rohr

Members Absent: Representatives Beltz, Holle

Discussion Topics:

- Calculation of the average run
- Threshold to receive funding
- Rural assistance grant

2:32 p.m. Representative Heinert, District 32, introduced the bill. .

2:34 p.m. William Kalanek, Lobbyist for the North Dakota EMS Association, testified in favor and submitted testimony, #33874.

2:41 p.m. Tim Blasl, President of the ND Hospital Association, testified in favor.

2:42 p.m. Chairman M. Ruby closed the hearing.

Jackson Toman, Committee Clerk

ND EMS Association proposed amendment to HB 1597

Bill Kalanek, ND EMS Association

Page 2, lines 9-13

5. ~~An operation is eligible to receive funding under this section if the operation is owned and operated by a city or county, or the operation is within the jurisdiction of a rural ambulance service district.~~ An operation is not eligible to receive funding under this section if the operation is located within fifteen miles from another operation and does less than fifty runs per year~~.~~ or if the operation does over 1000 runs per year.

2025 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Human Services Committee
Pioneer Room, State Capitol

HB 1597
2/18/2025

A BILL for an Act to provide an exemption; and to provide for the distribution of state financial assistance to eligible ambulance service operations.

10:07 a.m. Chairman M. Ruby opened the meeting.

Members Present: Chairman M. Ruby, Vice-Chairman Frelich, Representatives K. Anderson, Beltz, Bolinske, Davis, Dobervich, Fegley, Hendrix, Holle, Kiefert, Rios, Rohr

Discussion Topics:

- Committee action
- Grant eligibility

10:08 a.m. Chairman M. Ruby introduced amendments, #45227.

10:11 a.m. Bill Kalanek, ND EMS Association, testified and answered questions.

10:15 a.m. Chairman M. Ruby proposed amendments relating to grant calculations.

10:20 a.m. Representative Beltz moved to adopt amendment LC# 25.1076.01002.

10:20 a.m. Representative Bolinske seconded the motion.

Representatives	Vote
Representative Matthew Ruby	Y
Representative Kathy Frelich	Y
Representative Karen Anderson	Y
Representative Mike Beltz	Y
Representative Macy Bolinske	Y
Representative Jayme Davis	Y
Representative Gretchen Dobervich	Y
Representative Cleyton Fegley	Y
Representative Jared Hendrix	Y
Representative Dawson Holle	N
Representative Dwight Kiefert	Y
Representative Nico Rios	Y
Representative Karen Rohr	N

10:21 a.m. Motion passed 11-2-0.

10:21 a.m. Representative Dobervich moved a Do Pass as amended.

10:21 a.m. Vice-Chairman Frelich seconded the motion.

Representatives	Vote
Representative Matthew Ruby	Y
Representative Kathy Frelich	Y
Representative Karen Anderson	Y
Representative Mike Beltz	Y
Representative Macy Bolinske	Y
Representative Jayme Davis	Y
Representative Gretchen Dobervich	Y
Representative Cleyton Fegley	Y
Representative Jared Hendrix	Y
Representative Dawson Holle	N
Representative Dwight Kiefert	Y
Representative Nico Rios	Y
Representative Karen Rohr	N

10:22 a.m. Motion passed 11-2-0.

Chairman M. Ruby will carry the bill.

10:23 a.m. Chairman M. Ruby closed the meeting.

Jackson Toman, Committee Clerk

25.1076.01002
Title.02000

Adopted by the Human Services Committee
February 18, 2025

Sixty-ninth
Legislative Assembly
of North Dakota

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO

2-18-25

JB 1082

HOUSE BILL NO. 1597

Introduced by

Representative Heinert

A BILL for an Act to provide an exemption; and to provide for the distribution of state financial assistance to eligible ambulance service operations.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:

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.
2. The operation's grant amount must be determined by deducting the following amounts from the operation's budget calculated under subsection 1:
   a. The product of the operation's average number of runs for the two most recent calendar years multiplied by the reimbursement for a run. The reimbursement for a run is seven hundred ninety-five dollars; and

2 of 2

b. The product of the property tax valuation of the operation's response area for the most recent taxable year multiplied by five mills. The property tax valuation of the operation's response area must be provided by the county auditor annually no later than July thirty-first. If the response area covers multiple counties, the county auditor with the most response area is responsible for coordinating with the other county auditors.

3. The maximum total grant calculation for each operation, after accounting for the deductions in subsection 2, may not exceed two hundred twenty-five thousand dollars.

4. The maximum reimbursement for a run is two thousand twenty-three dollars. For grant amounts distributed through June 30, 2026, 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. The department shall distribute a prorated share of the operation's calculated grant amount if legislative appropriations for state financial assistance for emergency medical services is not sufficient to provide full grant funding calculated under this section.

~~5.~~6. ~~An operation is eligible to receive funding under this section if the operation is owned and operated by a city or county, or the operation is within the jurisdiction of a rural ambulance service district.~~ An operation is not eligible to receive funding under this section if the operation ~~is located within fifteen miles from another operation and~~ does ~~less~~more than ~~seven hundredfifty~~eight hundred runs per year.

~~6.~~7. A response area acquired after April 1, 2024, due to an adjacent ambulance service closure is not calculated in the operations response area for the purpose of the grant calculation.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE
HB 1597

Human Services Committee (Rep. M. Ruby, Chairman) recommends **AMENDMENTS (25.1076.01002)** and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** (11 YEAS, 2 NAYS, 0 ABSENT OR EXCUSED AND NOT VOTING). HB 1597 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar.

25.1076.01002
Title.02000

Adopted by the Human Services Committee
February 18, 2025

Sixty-ninth
Legislative Assembly
of North Dakota

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO

HOUSE BILL NO. 1597

Introduced by

Representative Heinert

A BILL for an Act to provide an exemption; and to provide for the distribution of state financial assistance to eligible ambulance service operations.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:

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.
2. The operation's grant amount must be determined by deducting the following amounts from the operation's budget calculated under subsection 1:
   a. The product of the operation's average number of runs for the two most recent calendar years multiplied by the reimbursement for a run. The reimbursement for a run is seven hundred ninety-five dollars; and

b. The product of the property tax valuation of the operation's response area for the most recent taxable year multiplied by five mills. The property tax valuation of the operation's response area must be provided by the county auditor annually no later than July thirty-first. If the response area covers multiple counties, the county auditor with the most response area is responsible for coordinating with the other county auditors.

3. The maximum total grant calculation for each operation, after accounting for the deductions in subsection 2, may not exceed two hundred twenty-five thousand dollars.

4. The maximum reimbursement for a run is two thousand twenty-three dollars. For grant amounts distributed through June 30, 2026, 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. The department shall distribute a prorated share of the operation's calculated grant amount if legislative appropriations for state financial assistance for emergency medical services is not sufficient to provide full grant funding calculated under this section.

~~5.~~6. ~~An operation is eligible to receive funding under this section if the operation is owned and operated by a city or county, or the operation is within the jurisdiction of a rural ambulance service district.~~ An operation is not eligible to receive funding under this section if the operation ~~is located within fifteen miles from another operation and~~ does ~~less~~more than ~~seven hundredfifty~~eight hundred runs per year.

~~6.~~7. A response area acquired after April 1, 2024, due to an adjacent ambulance service closure is not calculated in the operations response area for the purpose of the grant calculation.

2025 SENATE HUMAN SERVICES

HB 1597

2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Human Services Committee
Fort Lincoln Room, State Capitol

HB 1597
3/18/2025

A BILL for an Act to provide an exemption; and to provide for the distribution of state financial assistance to eligible ambulance service operations.

10:57 a.m. Chairman Lee opened the hearing.

Members Present: Chairman Lee, Vice-Chairman Weston, Senator Van Oosting, Senator Clemens, Senator Hogan, Senator Roers.

Discussion Topics:

- Reduction of High-Volume Services

10:57 a.m. William Kalanek, EMS lobbyist, testified in favor and submitted testimony #42673.

11:06 a.m. Senator Hogan Moved amendment LC#25.1076.02001.

11:07 a.m. Senator Roers seconded the motion.

Senators	Vote
Senator Judy Lee	Y
Senator Kent Weston	Y
Senator David A. Clemens	Y
Senator Kathy Hogan	Y
Senator Kristin Roers	Y
Senator Desiree Van Oosting	Y

Motion passed 6-0-0.

Additional written testimony:

Tim Blasl, President North Dakota Hospital Association, submitted testimony #42607.

11:07 a.m. Chairman Lee closed the hearing.

Andrew Ficek, Committee Clerk

CO 3/19/25 1 of 2

25.1076.02001
Title.03000

Adopted by the Senate Human Services Committee
March 19, 2025

Sixty-ninth
Legislative Assembly
of North Dakota

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO FIRST ENGROSSMENT

ENGROSSED HOUSE BILL NO. 1597

Introduced by

Representative Heinert

A BILL for an Act to provide an exemption; and to provide for the distribution of state financial assistance to eligible ambulance service operations.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:

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 must be the lesser of:
   a. The calculation in subsection 2; or
   b. The cost of a run multiplied by the average number of runs.
2. The operation's grant amount must be determined by deducting the following amounts from the operation's budget calculated under subsection 1:

a. The product of the operation's average number of runs for the two most recent calendar years multiplied by the reimbursement for a run. The reimbursement for a run is seven hundred ninety-five dollars; and

b. The product of the property tax valuation of the operation's response area for the most recent taxable year multiplied by five mills. The property tax valuation of the operation's response area must be provided by the county auditor annually no later than July thirty-first. If the response area covers multiple counties, the county auditor with the most response area is responsible for coordinating with the other county auditors.

3. The maximum total grant calculation for each operation, after accounting for the deductions in subsection 2, may not exceed two hundred twenty-five thousand dollars.

4. The maximum reimbursement for a run is two thousand twenty-three dollars.

~~For~~Notwithstanding subsection 5, for grant amounts distributed through ~~June 30, 2026~~June 30, 2027, 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. The department shall distribute a prorated share of the operation's calculated grant amount if legislative appropriations for state financial assistance for emergency medical services is not sufficient to provide full grant funding calculated under this section.

6. An operation is not eligible to receive funding under this section if the operation does more than eight hundred runs per year.

7. A response area acquired after April 1, 2024, due to an adjacent ambulance service closure is not calculated in the operations response area for the purpose of the grant calculation.

2025 HB 1597
Senate Human Services Committee
Senator Judy Lee, Chairman
March 18, 2025

Madam Chairman Lee and members of the Senate Human Services Committee, I am Tim Blasl, President of the North Dakota Hospital Association (NDHA). I am here to testify in support of Engrossed House Bill 1597. I ask that you give this bill a **Do Pass** recommendation.

We support the bill because it renews state financial assistance to eligible ambulance service operations. Several of our hospital members own an ambulance service. The bill provides financial assistance to smaller ambulance operations. The formula provided in the bill for funding considers factors such as average run volume, budget, cost per ambulance run, and local tax revenue. It focuses funding on smaller operations and provides that an ambulance operation is not eligible to receive this funding if the operation provides more than 800 runs per year.

Some Critical Access Hospitals that operate their own ambulance operations and provide less than 800 ambulance runs per year often cannot cover the cost of providing the ambulance service and they must rely on tax revenue and financial assistance such as that provided in this bill in order to continue providing ambulance services in their communities. Without such financial assistance, some of these ambulance operations may not survive.

In summary, we support the funding this bill provides and the intent to facilitate the maintenance of a reliable EMS system in rural areas of our State. We hope that you will give the bill a **Do Pass** recommendation. I would be happy to respond to any questions you may have. Thank you.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tim Blasl, President
North Dakota Hospital Association

Testimony on HB 1597
Bill Kalanek
ND EMS Association
Senate Human Services Committee
March 18, 2025

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, 202~~6~~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

2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Human Services Committee
Fort Lincoln Room, State Capitol

HB 1597
3/19/2025

A BILL for an Act to provide an exemption; and to provide for the distribution of state financial assistance to eligible ambulance service operations.

2:30 p.m. Chairman Lee opened the hearing.

Members Present: Chairman Lee, Vice-Chairman Weston, Senator Van Oosting, Senator Clemens, Senator Hogan, Senator Roers.

Discussion Topics:

- Grant distribution

2:32 p.m. Senator Roers moved Do Pass as amended.

2:32 p.m. Second Hogan seconded the motion.

Senators	Vote
Senator Judy Lee	Y
Senator Kent Weston	Y
Senator David A. Clemens	Y
Senator Kathy Hogan	Y
Senator Kristin Roers	Y
Senator Desiree Van Oosting	Y

Motion passed 6-0-0.

Senator Roers will carry the bill.

2:33 p.m. Chairman Lee closed the hearing.

Andrew Ficek, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE
ENGROSSED HB 1597

Human Services Committee (Sen. Lee, Chairman) recommends **AMENDMENTS (25.1076.02001)** and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** (6 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT OR EXCUSED AND NOT VOTING). HB 1597 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar. This bill does not affect workforce development.