2025 SENATE HUMAN SERVICES

SB 2101

2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Human Services Committee
Fort Lincoln Room, State Capitol

SB 2101
1/13/2025

Relating to emergency medical services response requirements.

11:05 a.m. Chairman Lee called the meeting to order.

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

Discussion Topics:

- Availability of ambulances
- Ensuring statewide district coverage
- Formal agreements

11:06 a.m. Senator Todd Beard testified in favor and submitted testimony #28634.

11:07 a.m. Corey Johnson, Assistant Chief of Williston Fire Department, testified in favor and submitted testimony #28725.

11:17 a.m. Bill Colonic, ND EMS services, Testified in Favor.

11:19 a.m. Tim Wiedrich, Section Chief of ND Department of Human Services, testified in Neutral.

Additional written testimony:

Connie Samuelson, submitted testimony in opposition #28528.

11:24 a.m. Chairwoman Lee closed the hearing.

Andrew Ficek, Committee Clerk

Regarding SB 2101

Please accept this written Testimony opposing the above proposed Bill.
Rural communities have been struggling for years to find adequate staffing and medical personnel as well as equipment necessary to provide the EMT care required to their surrounding areas.
I believe the unnecessary, expensive and intrusive requirements this bill requires will impose more burdens to EMTs in rural communities who are currently struggling; not to mention the additional funds that will be requested by the State of ND Tax Payers.
As we can all attest, the medical profession, hospitals and clinics are experiencing staff shortages of nurses, physicians, doctors and all areas related with the medical community. This bill would only exacerbate those shortages throughout the state of ND.
I strongly urge a NO vote on this bill that seems solely reliant on being self-serving for a few and costly for all.
Thank you,
Connie Samuelson, Minot

SB2101

Members of the committee. My name is Todd Beard. I am the Senator from District 23 serving the Williston and Trenton area.

SB2101 comes before you on behalf of our local emergency services. Within century code the Health and Human Services Department oversees Emergency Medical Services Operations Licenses, namely Chapter 23-27. Under Chapter 4 lists Standards for Operators which are the standards for ambulance services. The intent of this bill is to add a standard for the ambulance service to ensure availability of those services for 911 calls when transport of a patient is needed for a nonemergent service.

Basically this is a bill to address the issue of ensuring that ambulance services are available for calls when a non-emergency based transport is needed from one hospital to another.

There will be testimony after me that can better clarify the reason this bill is needed.

Thank you for your consideration and ask for a DO PASS recommendation. I stand for any questions.

CITY OF
WILLISTON
FIRE DEPARTMENT

January 13th, 2025

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

RE: Support for SB 2101

Chairman Lee and Committee Members,

My name is Corey Johnson, and I serve the City of Williston as the Assistant Chief of Operations and a Paramedic for their Fire & Ambulance Department. I am here today in support of SB 2101.

I want to start by posing a question for you to think about throughout this hearing. What is your expectation from your local ambulance service if you, a friend, a family member, or a constituent calls 9-1-1 after suffering a medical emergency or traumatic event?

My basic expectation is that an ambulance will be dispatched and respond in a timely manner. This committee knows better than any that ambulance services are in distress, and you all have been working through the many challenges our ambulance services throughout the state face. Thank you for investing your time and efforts towards these critical issues. Last week, I watched the hearing on Senate Bill 2033 regarding distressed ambulance services. During that session, this committee discussed several challenges, such as EMS as an Essential Service and EMS interactions with PSAPs. Senate Bill 2101 stands to address some of those issues brought up during that discussion.

As we are here today, no law in North Dakota requires an ambulance service to exist. Furthermore, no law or rule requires an ambulance service to respond. Arguably, there have been many efforts to correct this over the past few years. The EMS Unit of HHS and the EMS Association have worked with this assembly to establish processes to ensure that every inch of North Dakota falls within the jurisdiction of an ambulance service and that each ambulance service establishes a taxing district to secure funding to support their operation. These processes bring us closer to EMS as an Essential Service. SB 2101 will codify the most critical role an ambulance service must provide, the obligation to respond to a 9-1-1 call.

One area that Century Code and Administrative Code have not fully defined is what a call for service is or an essential call for service.

Today, an ambulance service is only required to attempt to be available to respond to a call for service and report themselves out of service if they cannot. The HHS Department has rules that address ambulance service availability. The fault remains that a call for service is not fully defined, and nothing requires an ambulance service to ensure a continuity of operation while providing non-emergent services. For example, ambulances are often asked to provide standby services for sporting events. If an ambulance is staged at a high school football game and fails to respond to any other call for service, they have met the requirements of century code and administrative code as they are written today. Our PSAPs are left with the dilemma of dispatching other services into neighboring jurisdictions, often in our rural communities, leaving multiple areas unprotected. Although the example of a football game is a severe scenario that I hope never truly unfolds, it is still a possibility. The most realistic scenario, and one that does occur, is when ambulance services are providing interfacility or hospital-to-hospital transfers. When a local ambulance service commits its only available unit to deliver this type of service, there is no guarantee that an ambulance will be available to respond to a 9-1-1 call. SB 2101 provides that each service has a process in place to ensure a continuity of operations while performing these call types and ensures that someone will respond.

There are many demands on local ambulances to provide a wide range of services to their community. With the acts of the last legislative session, most ambulance services report back to some form of political subdivision, such as cities, counties, or independent taxing districts. SB 2101 is not intended to limit the services these agencies provide but rather encourage a reliable and effective system to ensure continuity of operations. One method of accomplishing this continuity would be through cooperative agreements or mutual aid agreements. It is not right for a service's neighbor to be unaware of their obligation to be dispatched to another jurisdiction. Senate Bill 2101 requires them to work out this system before an emergency occurs and eliminate the burden and confusion from our 9-1-1 centers.

Through much discussion regarding this bill, it has been identified that this intent may not have been fully addressed. Sometimes, interfacility/hospital-to-hospital transport could be considered an emergency. Some ambulance services within the state only have one ambulance. The original wording of this bill could be misrepresented to hinder those agreements. If there are no objections from Senator Beard, I recommend changing the wording of SB 2101 to

> "Requirements for services to ensure reliable response to 911 and emergent inter-facility transport responses, while providing non-emergent services."

As written, or with this amendment, I ask for your support in recommending SB 2101 as a "do pass" to the Senate floor.

Sincerely,

Corey A. Johnson, B.S.
Assistant Fire Chief, City of Williston Fire Department
(701) 572-3400 ext. 2317
coreyj@ci.williston.nd.us

2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Human Services Committee
Fort Lincoln Room, State Capitol

SB 2101
1/13/2025

Relating to emergency medical services response requirements.

2:54 p.m. Chairman Lee opened the meeting.

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

Discussion Topics:

- Committee Action

3:03 p.m. Senator Roers Moved Amendment LC#25.0332.01001.

3:03 p.m. Senator Van Oosting 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

3:04 p.m. Motion passed 6-0-0.

3:04 p.m. Senator Van Oosting moved Do Pass as amended.

3:04 p.m. Senator Weston 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

3:05 p.m. Motion passed 6-0-0.

3:05 p.m. Senator Roers will carry the bill.

3:06 p.m. Chairman Lee closed the hearing.

Andrew Ficek, Committee Clerk

25.0332.01001
Title.02000

Adopted by the Human Services Committee
January 13, 2025

Sixty-ninth
Legislative Assembly
of North Dakota

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO

SENATE BILL NO. 2101

Introduced by

Senator Beard

Representative Richter

A BILL for an Act to amend and reenact subsection 1 of section 23-27-04 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to emergency medical services response requirements.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:

SECTION 1. AMENDMENT. Subsection 1 of section 23-27-04 of the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

1. An emergency medical services operation ~~within this state~~ may not operate unless ~~the operation is~~ licensed ~~in accordance with~~under this chapter ~~and~~. The department shall adopt rules ~~adopted by the department of health and human services. The rules~~for standards for operators which must include:
   a. Time when operator's services must be available~~.~~;
   b. Requirements for services to ~~be available for and~~ensure a reliable response to ~~prioritize~~ 911 ~~responses~~and emergent interfacility transports, while providing ~~other~~ nonemergent services;
   c. Type of motor vehicle operator's license needed for drivers of ground vehicles~~.~~;
   ~~c.~~d. Training standards for ~~operation~~ personnel~~.~~;
   ~~d.~~e. Equipment and ground vehicle standards~~.~~;
   ~~e.~~f. Annual license fees~~.~~;
   ~~f.~~g. Number of personnel required for each run~~.~~;
   ~~g.~~h. The scope of practice for uncertified drivers, certified personnel, and emergency medical services professionals~~.~~;
   ~~h.~~i. Performance standards, which may include response time standards~~.~~; and

~~i.~~j. Other requirements as ~~may be found~~ necessary to carry out the ~~intent~~requirements of this chapter.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE
SB 2101

Human Services Committee (Sen. Lee, Chairman) recommends **AMENDMENTS (25.0332.01001)** and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** (6 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2101 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar. This bill does not affect workforce development.

2025 HOUSE HUMAN SERVICES

SB 2101

2025 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Human Services Committee
Pioneer Room, State Capitol

SB 2101
3/10/2025

Relating to emergency medical services response requirements.

3:51 p.m. Chairman M. Ruby opened the hearing.

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

Discussion Topics:

- Non-emergency transport for patients
- Definition of other emergent services for ambulances

3:52p.m. Todd Beard, Senator, Williston, introduced the bill and submitted testimony #39855.

3:53 p.m. Corey Johnson, Assistant Fire Chief, City of Williston Fire Department, testified and submitted testimony in favor #39824.

3:56 p.m. Chairman M. Ruby closed the hearing.

Madaline Cooper, Committee Clerk for Jackson Toman, Committee Clerk

CITY OF
WILLISTON
FIRE DEPARTMENT

March 10th, 2025

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

RE: Support for SB 2101

Chairman Ruby and Committee Members,

My name is Corey Johnson, and I serve the City of Williston as the Assistant Chief of Operations and a Paramedic for their Fire & Ambulance Department. I am here today in support of SB 2101.

I want to start by posing a question for you to think about throughout this hearing. What is your expectation from your local ambulance service if you, a friend, a family member, or a constituent calls 9-1-1 after suffering a medical emergency or traumatic event?

My basic expectation is that an ambulance will be dispatched and respond in a timely manner. This committee knows better than any that ambulance services are in distress, and you all have been working through the many challenges our ambulance services throughout the state face. Thank you for investing your time and efforts towards these critical issues. I have watched and participated in several committee hearings discussing EMS issues this session. Many challenges were discussed, such as EMS as an Essential Service and EMS interactions with PSAPs. Senate Bill 2101 stands to address some of those issues brought up during these discussions.

As we are here today, no law in North Dakota requires an ambulance service to exist. Furthermore, no law or rule requires an ambulance service to respond. Arguably, there have been many efforts to correct this over the past few years. The EMS Unit of HHS and the EMS Association have worked with this assembly to establish processes to ensure that every inch of North Dakota falls within the jurisdiction of an ambulance service and that each ambulance service establishes a taxing district to secure funding to support their operation. These processes bring us closer to EMS as an Essential Service. SB 2101 will codify the most critical role an ambulance service must provide, the obligation to respond to a 9-1-1 call.

One area that Century Code and Administrative Code have not fully defined is what a call for service is or an essential call for service.

Today, an ambulance service is only required to attempt to be available to respond to a call for service and report themselves out of service if they cannot. The HHS Department has rules that address ambulance service availability. The fault remains that a call for service is not fully defined, and nothing requires an ambulance service to ensure a continuity of operation while providing non-emergent services. For example, ambulances are often asked to provide standby services for sporting events. If an ambulance is staged at a high school football game and fails to respond to any other call for service, they have met the requirements of century code and administrative code as they are written today. Our PSAPs are left with the dilemma of dispatching other services into neighboring jurisdictions, often in our rural communities, leaving multiple areas unprotected. Although the example of a football game is a severe scenario that I hope never truly unfolds, it is still a possibility. The most realistic scenario, and one that does occur, is when ambulance services are providing interfacility or hospital-to-hospital transfers. When a local ambulance service commits its only available unit to deliver this type of service, there is no guarantee that an ambulance will be available to respond to a 9-1-1 call. SB 2101 provides that each service has a process in place to ensure a continuity of operations while performing these call types and ensures that someone will respond.

There are many demands on local ambulances to provide a wide range of services to their community. With the acts of the last legislative session, most ambulance services report back to some form of political subdivision, such as cities, counties, or independent taxing districts. SB 2101 is not intended to limit the services these agencies provide but rather encourage a reliable and effective system to ensure continuity of operations. One method of accomplishing this continuity would be through cooperative agreements or mutual aid agreements. It is not right for a service's neighbor to be unaware of their obligation to be dispatched to another jurisdiction. Senate Bill 2101 would require them to work out this system before an emergency occurs and eliminate the burden and confusion from our 9-1-1 centers.

Through much discussion regarding this bill, it has been identified that this intent may not have been fully addressed. Sometimes, interfacility/hospital-to-hospital transport could be considered an emergency. Some ambulance services within the state only have one ambulance. The original wording of this bill could be misrepresented to hinder those agreements. Therefore, this bill was amended to acknowledge emergent inter-facility transfers and allow HHS to define emergent versus non-emergent services further.

I ask for your support in recommending SB 2101 as a "do pass" to the House floor.

Sincerely,

Corey A. Johnson, B.S.
Assistant Fire Chief, City of Williston Fire Department
(701) 572-3400 ext. 2317
coreyj@ci.williston.nd.us

SB2101

Members of the committee. My name is Todd Beard. I am the Senator from District 23 serving the Williston and Trenton area.

SB2101 comes before you on behalf of our local emergency services. Within century code the Health and Human Services Department oversees Emergency Medical Services Operations Licenses, namely Chapter 23-27. Under Chapter 4 lists Standards for Operators which are the standards for ambulance services. The intent of this bill is to add a standard for the ambulance service to ensure availability of those services for 911 calls when transport of a patient is needed for a nonemergent service.

Basically this is a bill to address the issue of ensuring that ambulance services are available for calls when a non-emergency based transport is needed from one hospital to another.

There will be testimony after me that can better clarify the reason this bill is needed.

Thank you for your consideration and ask for a DO PASS recommendation. I stand for any questions.

2025 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Human Services Committee
Pioneer Room, State Capitol

SB 2101
3/10/2025

Relating to emergency medical services response requirements.

3:51 p.m. Chairman M. Ruby opened the meeting.

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

Discussion Topics:

- Committee Action

4:41p.m. Representative Anderson moved a Do Pass.

4:41 p.m. Representative Rios seconded the motion.

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

4:41 p.m. Motion carried 12-0-1.

Representative Rohr will carry the bill.

4:44 p.m. Chairman M. Ruby adjourned the meeting.

Jackson Toman, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE
ENGROSSED SB 2101 (25.0332.02000)

Human Services Committee (Rep. M. Ruby, Chairman) recommends **DO PASS** (12 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 1 ABSENT OR EXCUSED AND NOT VOTING). SB 2101 was placed on the Fourteenth order on the calendar.