

To The Honorable Members of the House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee

My name is Anthony Tucci and I am the Pennsylvania Professional Firefighters (PPFFA) EMS committee chairman in addition, I am the Deputy Chief for Western Berks Ambulance Association (WBAA). The PPFFA represents 84 Fire/ EMS departments with most of the agencies participating in some form of EMS care. WBAA covers approximately 100 sq. miles at the western end of Berks County. We provide primary EMS coverage to the municipalities of West Reading Borough, Wyomissing Borough, Bern Township, Spring Township, Sinking Spring Borough, Lower Heidelberg Township, South Heidelberg Township, Robesonia Borough, Wernersville, Borough, Womelsdorf Borough, Bernville Borough and North Heidelberg Township. We assist other EMS services within Berks county area as a secondary resource.

Over the past 20 years EMS has evolved to meet the needs of the community we serve by adapting to the ever changing HealthCare field. Most importantly, Community Paramedic, otherwise known as Mobile Integrated Healthcare, can meet the objectives of the Triple Aim as developed by the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI). The triple aim is a framework that “describes an approach to optimizing health system performance and pursues three dimensions,”

- Improving patient experience,
- Improving population health, and
- Reducing the per capita costs of health care.

Specifically, now, a community paramedic program could work in coordination with other healthcare providers to reduce the demand on costly emergency department visits and help in the management of chronic illness. These two improvements to the health of the overall population, through coordination with both public and private resources, can improve the patients experience and perception of healthcare providers. These programs also add to the flexibility of patient management, which will help to reduce costs.¹

The value of this Bill, as it relates to the statements above, will facilitate EMS in seeking innovative ways to collaborate with other providers in the

¹ Source: Institute of Healthcare Improvement website. Retrieved from: <http://www.ihl.org/engage/initiatives/tripleaim/pages/default.aspx>

healthcare system. Prehospital care providers have a vested interest as members of the community they serve to ensure patients receive equitable access to care.

A community paramedic program, as a part of an integrated health system, must build a coalition with hospitals and other health care providers and social service oriented programs to reduce demand on the emergency department as a means of strengthening local emergency preparedness. Furthermore, in order to ensure that this type of program is sustainable, there must be reasonable payment for service.

In January, 2015 Modern Health Care published an article highlighting that the call volume of America's emergency departments is increasing. This is largely due to the increase in insured Americans, but the lack of accessibility to primary care providers (PCPs). Community Paramedics could be used as physician extenders to help perform in-field assessment, patient management, or even triage of patients waiting to see a PCP.²

We respectfully ask for your support on this important and innovative topic known as House Bill 1113.

Respectfully Submitted;

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² Source: Institute of Healthcare Improvement website. Retrieved from:
<http://www.ihl.org/engage/initiatives/tripleaim/pages/default.aspx>