



**Suburban
Hospital Alliance**
of New York State, LLC

SUPPORT MEMO

Date: May 22, 2024
To: Hudson Valley and Long Island Members of the Legislature
From: Wendy Darwell, President & CEO
Re: Support Emergency Medical Services Priorities

Emergency medical services play a critically important role in caring for our communities. Like other segments of the health sector, EMS agencies have been deeply stressed by the workforce shortage, within their own ranks and exacerbated by the workforce shortage in hospitals that have contributed to longer wait times for decanting patients at emergency departments. While we need a much broader range of solutions to bolster EMS – workforce and training investments, more flexibility to develop new models of care, increased reimbursement – we urge your support for these two bills currently under consideration.

A.7524-A (Thiele) – in Assembly Ways & Means

S.7268-A (Martinez) – on 2nd Report Calendar

This legislation would increase the personal income tax credit for active volunteer ambulance workers and firefighters from \$200 to \$800 for individuals and from \$400 to \$1600 for married joint filers. The tax credit has not been increased since its enactment 17 years ago.

Volunteer emergency responders perform essential work for our communities, committing considerable personal time and expense to keep us safe. Although this increase would be modest, it at least demonstrates some measure of recognition of the sacrifices these men and women make every day.

A.9102-A (Kelles) – in Assembly Ways & Means

S.8486-A (Hinchey) – on 2nd Report Calendar

This legislation would allow for Medicaid reimbursement for treatment in place (TIP) and transportation to alternative care destinations (TAD) by emergency medical services. Currently, EMS providers are only paid for transporting patients to a hospital emergency room when responding to an emergency call, even if the patient can be treated safely and more appropriately in the field or at another care site, like an urgent care center or a mental health clinic.

If incentivized to treat patients in the field or transport them to lower acuity settings, EMS agencies could operate more efficiently and reduce overcrowding at emergency departments – reducing wait times that stretch EMS resources and exacerbate workforce shortages.

On behalf of the hospitals and health systems on Long Island and in the Hudson Valley, the Suburban Hospital Alliance urges the passage of these two bills to support our partners and colleagues in the emergency medical services.