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State Leaders Abandon Emergency Services in Final State Budget

Neglect to prioritize essential EMS funding will jeopardize public health and safety

In response to Gov. Whitmer and Michigan legislators abandoning essential EMS funding in the final Fiscal year 2026 budget approved this morning, Michigan Association of Ambulance Services Executive Director Angela Madden issued the following statement:

“It is reprehensible to expect EMS agencies to be able to provide lifesaving services to Michigan residents without being paid for doing so. That injustice continues as state leaders force EMS agencies continue to carry the state’s debt for service to its prisons, despite the law requiring them to respond. Even after assurances that this issue was handled in the final state budget, the rug was pulled out from under EMS in the 11th hour, leaving agencies, who just want to focus on saving lives, holding the bag yet again. It is irresponsible to hold out for repayment from litigation that may never even come.

“This isn’t just a matter of unpaid bills. This lack of compensation is putting a strain on emergency services all over the state. While \$6 million is a drop in the bucket for the state budget, for EMS agencies it means less ambulances on the road, critical upgrades not taking place and inability to cover essential costs. This failure will make it harder for EMS to be there for Michigan residents when they need it most.

“To make matters worse, Michigan EMS agencies have been patiently waiting for years for fair compensation after they were promised an increase in 2021 that was never properly implemented. This was a mistake in 2021 and it’s unacceptable that it has yet to be fixed, while agencies are still expected to respond as if they are being fully paid.

“It’s shocking that the final budget, which supposedly has public safety as a focus, neglects emergency medical services funding that is essential to keeping our communities safe. While EMS certainly understands the need to cut waste and fix our roads, we never would have thought those priorities would come at the expense of emergency services in our state.

“We urge Governor Whitmer and legislators to swiftly right these wrongs and fairly compensate EMS so emergency services can continue to do what they do best – serve their communities.”