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State leaders prioritize EMS funding for the first time in more than 20 years

State budget includes an additional \$12.9 million for Medicaid reimbursements, helping agencies bolster salaries for EMS heroes

Lansing, Michigan – Michigan EMS providers are applauding Governor Gretchen Whitmer and Michigan legislators today after an additional \$12.9 million was allocated for EMS services in the Fiscal Year 2022 budget, signed today by the governor.

After decades of underfunding, Michigan Association of Ambulance Services (MAAS) and Michigan Association of Fire Chiefs (MAFC) requested an investment in EMS for Medicaid reimbursements, which only covered 10-25% of emergency response costs. EMS providers hadn't had a true increase in Medicaid reimbursement rates in more than 20 years.

"The pandemic and decades of underfunding pushed Michigan EMS agencies to the brink, and investment was long overdue," said Jack Fisher, MAAS President and Executive Director of Medic 1 Ambulance in Berrien County. "This budget increase will allow us to increase pay for paramedics and EMTs and recruit much-needed new staff into the profession."

State leaders invested \$12.9 million in general fund dollars for reimbursement rates, which with a federal match will draw down a total of nearly \$50 million for EMS.

"The state's investment in EMS will relieve some of the financial burdens emergency providers are facing so that we can focus on serving our communities," said MAFC President Jeff Roberts, Chief of the Wixom Fire Department. "We greatly appreciate the Governor and Legislature for recognizing the importance of investing in emergency services."

Prior to this investment, EMS agencies hadn't received a rate increase paid by the state since 2000, and payments have been reduced twice since then.

About MAAS

The Michigan Association of Ambulance Services is a statewide trade association representing and advocating for ambulance services. MAAS members serve 70 percent of Michigan counties and were responsible for more than 700,000 or 61 percent of ambulance transports in 2020. MAAS members also provide community paramedicine, ER diversion and 9-1-1 services in several areas of Michigan. For more information, visit www.miambulance.org.

About MAFC

The Michigan Association of Fire Chiefs established in the early 50's to assist its members in their efforts to promote effective fire prevention and suppression, emergency medical services and other emergency services through education, technical and legislative means. For more information visit www.michiefs.org/MAFC

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