



**Oregon Chapter
American College of
Emergency Physicians**

Date: February 5, 2024

To: Rep. Rob Nosse, Chair
Rep. Travis Nelson, Vice-Chair
Rep. Christine Goodwin, Vice-Chair
Members of the House Behavioral Health and Healthcare
Committee

From: David Lehrfeld MD, FACEP
Oregon Chapter of the American College of Emergency
Physicians (OR-ACEP)

Subject: HB 4081 EMS Modernization

Chair Nosse, Vice Chairs and members of the House Health Care Committee:

My name is Dr. David Lehrfeld. I'm the state EMS Director but today I'm testifying on behalf of Oregon Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians in strong support for HB 4081, the EMS modernization bill. This bill will coordinate emergency health care using a regionalized approach and most importantly, flag problems at the crisis point, determine what services are needed and deliver the patient to the right care, including specialty care centers. It also upgrades the ability of the EMS system to respond to disasters such as the COVID-19 pandemic, wildfires or the severe ice storm last month.

We wish to thank Rep. Dacia Grayber and her staff for their charismatic leadership on this effort to improve our state's EMS system for all Oregonians. This is the most important bill for EMS in decades. We appreciate her engagement of over 70 stakeholders to come together to develop a bill to improve the state's health care system and reduce morbidity and mortality for trauma, stroke, cardiac care and other emergencies. Improved response is especially critical for rural and minority populations with disproportionate access to emergency care.

This has been a longtime priority for the chapter. Over a decade ago, Dr. John Moorhead chaired the OHA Emergency Healthcare Task Force. Its mission was to

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Chapter Executive- Sierra Acker

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seriously assess and make recommendations for the improvement to Oregon's emergency health care system with a focus on improving the delivery system for EMS care. The chief priorities are echoed in HB 4081: regionalization of an accountable system of emergency care with the goal of getting patients to the getting the right care to the right patients by directing them to the most appropriate facility the first time. It will do this through state standards, region plans and local protocols. It will improve regional and state data sources using existing data to predict and measure outcomes, foster comprehensive coordination to assist with activating appropriate resources and directing high risk patients to the appropriate facility, including the transfer of the sickest patients with a higher level of care. Data collected will be utilized by state and regional boards to continuously improve the system.

Virtually all Oregon residents rely on a robust emergency health care system in the state. Yet the EMS system is lagging behind and the global pandemic has emphasized the urgency of improving our system of care to address the emergency health care needs of our state. These recommendations were carefully considered and other bills were introduced in prior sessions. Those policies didn't advance, but today, you have a historic opportunity with HB 4081 to move the future of Oregon's system of emergency care forward.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for your consideration.

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