

April 13, 2015

Dear Senator Dibble:

The Nonemergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) Advisory Committee is comprised of a variety of stakeholders including advocates, providers, counties, ambulances, and the affected departments. The committee has been meeting for several years to address the issues raised in the 2011 NEMT report from the Office of the Legislative Auditor. The Committee has made several recommendations that speak to nearly all of the recommendations from the report and have introduced bills to implement them both last year and this year.

I am writing to urge you to pass and fund the NEMT bill (SF1292) so that we can begin to implement recommendations. There are two important components to the bill:

The first component requires the same standards for vehicles and drivers for all NEMT providers, bringing us one step closer to having a unified system. The costs will be covered over time by the charge for the decal.

The second component increases rates in three different ways.

- 1) Increase the personal mileage rate to 80% of the IRS business deduction rate and to offer an increased mileage rate of 200% of the IRS business deduction rate for volunteer transport. This creates an incentive for more people to use their own cars or to have family members drive them essentially eliminating the burden of no-load miles for volunteer drivers. These two modes are the cheapest modes of transportation.
- 2) Eliminate the 4.5% reduction to providers and managed care. Providers were cut by 4.5% during the recession. NEMT providers are simply asking that the rates be restored to pre-recession amounts. Losing NEMT providers will result in people not being able to access needed medical care.
- 3) Implement the rate changes associated with the new modes of transportation. The new modes eliminate ATS and STS and move into a simpler categorization of modes including: client reimbursement, volunteer transport, unassisted transport, assisted transport, life-equipped/ramp transport, protected transport, and stretcher transport. The new modes cannot be implemented until the rates for each mode are established.

The legislature has directed the NEMT Advisory Committee to develop recommendations that address the OLA report. We have done that. To move forward, your support is needed in order to implement these needed changes.

Sincerely,

Joan Willshire
Executive Director, Minnesota State Council on Disability
Co-Chair, Nonemergency Medical Transportation Advisory Committee