

CAA Siren

Spring 2025

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CAA Mission

Be a recognized voice, advocate, and authority of best practices for ambulance providers throughout California.

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President's Message

Jaison Chand
President
California Ambulance Association

As we step into 2025, the California Ambulance Association (CAA) continues to champion the interests of our EMS professionals, ensuring that they receive the recognition, support, and resources they need to provide life-saving services to our communities. This issue of *Siren Magazine* reflects the incredible strides we have made over the past year and sets the stage for continued progress in the year ahead.

One of our most cherished traditions is welcoming the *2025 Stars of Life* to Sacramento. This event gave us the opportunity to celebrate the exceptional EMTs, paramedics, and dispatchers whose dedication and heroism make a profound impact on the lives of countless Californians. Their stories of courage and commitment remind us why we do what we do – ensuring the highest level of prehospital care for our communities. To our 2025 Stars: we salute you, and we are honored to recognize your service.

This edition of *Siren* provides insight into CAA's strategic planning efforts, legislative wins, and advocacy priorities. In this issue, I outline *CAA Strategic Planning*, highlighting the association's major achievements over the past year and the roadmap for 2025 and beyond. With a focus on membership growth, legislative advocacy, and fair reimbursement, we continue to solidify CAA's role as the trusted voice for ambulance providers in California.

Legislative progress remains at the heart of our mission, and this issue features a comprehensive guide to *What You Need to Know About Recently Passed EMS Legislation*. From peer support programs under AB 2859 to the landmark healthcare coverage expansion in SB 1180, we are ensuring that our members are informed and prepared for these changes. Our success in legislative advocacy is a direct result of the collective efforts of our membership, and we encourage all providers to stay engaged in these crucial policy discussions.

In addition, we extend a warm welcome to the newly elected members of the California State Legislature. As we continue to work with lawmakers to advance EMS priorities, we look forward to fostering strong partnerships that will enhance the delivery of emergency medical services across our state.



We are also proud to feature an insightful article by Jodi Ravel from the CARESTAR Foundation, *Why Emergency Medical Services Are Vital to Our Health Care System*. This piece highlights the evolving role of EMS in addressing social determinants of health, reducing hospital overcrowding, and expanding mobile integrated healthcare models. It is a reminder that EMS is not just about emergency response – it is a critical component of a more efficient and equitable healthcare system.

Finally, as we celebrate our achievements and prepare for the road ahead, I want to extend my deepest gratitude to our members, partners, and advocates. Your dedication to the profession and commitment to excellence drive our collective success. Whether it is through leadership development, legislative engagement, or community service, each of you plays a vital role in strengthening EMS in California.

Here's to another year of progress, advocacy, and honoring the heroes who keep our communities safe. Finally, it was amazing to see you all at *Stars of Life* where we continued to promote our shared mission to support and elevate the EMS Profession 🌟

Sincerely,

Jaison Chand, President,
California Ambulance Association

Executive Director's Report



Rob Lawrence
Executive Director
California Ambulance Association

As we embark on 2025, the California Ambulance Association (CAA) is looking forward to a dynamic and impactful year. Having successfully conducted our strategic planning, we are well-prepared for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. Our commitment to supporting EMS professionals, advocating for fair reimbursement, and strengthening industry leadership remains unwavering.

First, I would like to reflect on the recent wildland fires that devastated Southern California. We pay homage to our colleagues in the fire service for their tireless and heroic efforts in battling these fires. Additionally, I want to single out the ambulance crews who ran toward danger – evacuating citizens, hospitals, and vulnerable populations in the path of destruction, particularly during the Eaton Fire in Altadena. Your courage

and dedication exemplify the very best of EMS, and we honor your service.

We also acknowledge the personal toll these disasters have taken on our EMS workforce. Some of our colleagues lost their homes in these fires, and our thoughts remain with them as they rebuild their lives. The resilience and compassion of California's EMS providers continue to inspire us all.

Looking ahead, we anticipate an active legislative year, with a considerable number of newly elected officials in Sacramento. With these changes, there is an essential opportunity to educate policymakers on the vital work of California's ambulance services. Through proactive engagement and advocacy, we will ensure that our industry's priorities – including sustainable funding, improved EMS policies, and expanded

support for our workforce – remain at the forefront of legislative discussions.

It was great to see everyone at the 2025 Stars of Life and starting the process of planning our 2025 Annual Conference in Monterey later in the year. These events provide invaluable opportunities to celebrate our industry's achievements, recognize outstanding EMS professionals, and engage in meaningful discussions about the future of emergency medical services in California.

We are excited to continue our mission of advancing EMS excellence, supporting our members, and strengthening the essential role of ambulance services in California's healthcare system. Thank you for your commitment, and we look forward to working alongside you in the year ahead. ✨

The California Ambulance Association is now welcoming non-members to subscribe to the *Siren* magazine. Published quarterly, the *Siren* is a comprehensive source of information on issues that are important to the ambulance industry. Contents include feature articles, association educational and networking events, legislative updates and analysis, member news and much more.



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Why Emergency Medical Services Are Vital to Our Health Care System



Jodi Ravel
Program Officer
CARESTAR Foundation

When dialing 911 for a medical emergency, the expectation is clear: Licensed health care providers, typically paramedics and emergency medical technicians, will arrive within minutes at your location, any time of the day or night. They will provide emergency medical care, administer medications and, if needed, offer translation services, support family members and provide transportation to a hospital.

It's remarkable, really.

In 2021, fire departments alone responded to 25 million medical calls, up from five million in 1980 – highlighting the vast scale and importance of emergency medical services, (EMS). Few other services offer this level of immediate personalized response – certainly not Amazon, UPS or food delivery services.

Yet EMS respond to far more than just life-threatening emergencies. A significant portion of 911 calls request aid for other physical, mental and social needs. For instance, in California, about 10 percent of calls in 2021 were for traumatic injuries, while over 85 percent involved non-emergency issues. Paramedics and

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emergency medical technicians manage chronic diseases, evaluate mental health crises, assist vulnerable populations, intervene in substance use situations, and provide disaster response. They also offer medical support at large public events, such as concerts and sporting events.

Despite these responsibilities, emergency medical services are often overlooked in health care reform discussions. By providing care in communities, these services address longstanding barriers to health care access, including limited mobility or transportation, financial constraints, lack of insurance and fear of interacting with the health care system due to immigration status. Moreover, EMS plays a key role in alleviating the burden on hospitals by reducing overcrowding in emergency rooms and ambulance patient off-load times. They also provide care for unhoused individuals and people requiring behavioral health interventions – services that emergency departments are often ill-equipped to handle.

Recognizing this call to action, EMS providers have started exploring new models of first response. Innovations include the training and licensure of community paramedics, who understand the social determinants of health and can screen for behavioral health issues in the field. Another is mobile response teams that include mental health, social service and peer support professionals. Some 911 call centers are triaging patients into different response channels depending on the situation. These channels include police, fire, medical emergency, nurse-consult for health care, mobile crisis teams, and connections to 211 social services and 988 mental health professionals. Community paramedics are also experimenting with visiting patients at home after they're discharged from the hospital, to monitor recovery and manage lower-acuity needs.

While emergency medical services are not intended to replace primary care, they are a high-quality, efficient and essential component of the health care system. A compelling opportunity exists to shift lower-acuity and preventive care

services from expensive medical clinics and hospitals to community-based EMS care. If integrated strategically, this shift could optimize care, reduce inefficiencies, improve patient satisfaction and enhance health outcomes across communities.

How can we move forward? Transitioning to a health care system that embraces and reimburses community-based EMS care is complex, but the foundation is already in place. Emergency medical services are already a highly professional, regulated, data-driven, and nimble system across the country. To move this shift forward, six key areas warrant investigation and investment:

Improve the sharing of privacy-protected medical records across systems for continuity of care, including ambulances, medical offices, hospitals, pharmacies and social service agencies.

Expand public and private reimbursement to allow for a broader range of care and providers in community settings.

Broaden the scope of practice for paramedics and emergency medical technicians, allowing them to provide more care autonomously or through adaptive methods for medical oversight.

Redefine who is considered a “first responder” and provide corresponding education, training and licensure requirements so that more people are qualified to provide emergency care and receive appropriate reimbursement and wages.

Enhance dispatch system coordination to integrate multiple resources and responses, such as from 911, 988 and 211.

Expand the range of community locations to which ambulances can take patients for care, beyond hospital emergency departments.

Emergency medical services are a vital but often underappreciated pillar of the health care system. By recognizing the capabilities and exploring innovative models, we can build a more responsive, efficient and equitable health care system that improves the health and wellbeing of our communities. *

Jodi Ravel holds a master's degree in public health and serves as a program officer with the CARESTAR Foundation, a philanthropic organization reimagining emergency and prehospital care in California by elevating community voice and power.



CAA Strategic Planning: Progress, Wins, and the Road Ahead

Jaison Chand
President, California Ambulance Association



As we move on into 2026, I want to report to the membership the outputs of 2025. In January, the board gathered in person to conduct its 2025 strategic planning. Part of that process was to examine the last plan and identify achievements and success and also flag up, where more work is needed. My foreword for this edition is presented as a report and summary of the CAAs achievements and member benefits of the last 12 months.

With a mission to be the trusted voice for ambulance providers across the state, the 2024 Strategic Plan set ambitious goals in membership, legislative action, reimbursement advocacy, and education. Membership growth remained a central focus throughout the year. CAA set a goal to bring in ten new members, but by year's end, twelve organizations had joined, including First Responder Wellness, Mono County EMS Agency, and Brougham Ambulance.

Retention remains a priority, with renewals currently underway and final figures expected shortly. Engaging members in meaningful ways was another critical objective, and participation in CAA's flagship events reflected strong industry support. The Annual Convention saw 290 attendees, while Stars of Life attracted 159 participants, including 93 honored stars. Online engagement also expanded, with

Town Halls consistently drawing 35 to 50 attendees, demonstrating the value of virtual interaction within the association.

Stakeholder engagement and legislative advocacy were also at the forefront of CAA's 2024 agenda. Regular meetings with the California's other healthcare focused associations, and state regulatory agencies helped reinforce the association's role as a key industry advocate.

Representation at the EMS Commission and the Paramedic Disciplinary Review Board further strengthened CAA's influence in shaping policy and industry standards. One of the most significant legislative victories of the year was the passage of AB 2859, a CAA-sponsored bill that supports peer mental health resources for EMS professionals. On the defensive front, the association successfully opposed AB 1168, which would have introduced unfavorable EMS regulatory changes. The power of grassroots advocacy was evident in these efforts, proving that a united industry voice can have a tangible impact.

CAA's commitment to strengthening its political action committee also yielded results. With an initial fundraising goal of \$60,000, CAAPAC closed the year with more than \$94,000 in its account, ensuring the association remains well-positioned to support future legislative efforts. Moving

forward, legislative priorities will focus on securing increased Medi-Cal funding for interfacility transports, protecting ambulance providers' rights under existing EMS statutes, and monitoring the No Surprises Act's potential impact on ground ambulance services.

Ensuring fair reimbursement for ambulance providers remained a significant challenge in 2024. While the state budget included an increase in Medi-Cal rates, the full impact remains uncertain, and CAA is closely monitoring further developments. Throughout the year, the association worked to address underpayment issues with health plans, successfully partnering with the Department of Managed Health Care and LA Care to establish a formal complaint process for GEMT underpayments. Several training sessions were also held to educate members on collections, insurance filing, and balance billing regulations. As California's medical debt reporting laws evolve, CAA will continue to provide guidance to members on how best to navigate these changes.

Education remained a cornerstone of CAA's mission, with a strong focus on leadership development. The launch of the Ready Next program was a major milestone, providing a structured path for future

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EMS leaders. Cost reporting workshops and expanded conference sessions added to the association’s educational offerings, ensuring members had access to the financial and operational knowledge necessary for long-term success. As the organization looks ahead to 2025, efforts will continue to refine leadership training and integrate educational initiatives within the broader operational strategy.

The 2024 Strategic Plan set a strong foundation for growth and influence, but the work is far from over. With new legislative battles on the horizon, ongoing reimbursement challenges, and the ever-evolving demands of the EMS industry, CAA remains committed to advocating for its members and ensuring a sustainable future for ambulance services across California. As 2025 approaches, the focus will be on deepening stakeholder relationships, refining advocacy strategies, and continuing to push for fair and sustainable funding models.

With a dedicated membership and a clear mission, the California Ambulance Association stands ready to lead the way, ensuring the voices of EMS professionals are heard and their essential work is

valued. The full 2025 Strategic Plan is set to be unveiled in the coming months, and CAA remains steadfast in its commitment to shaping the future of EMS in California. ✨



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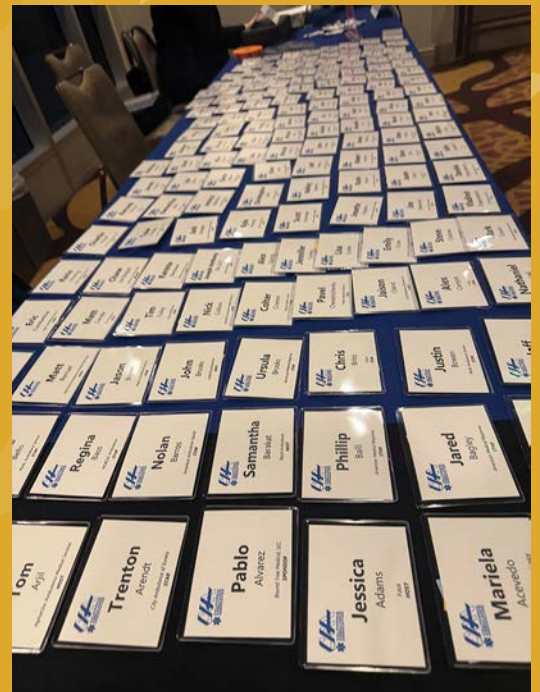
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We are honored to be part of the California Ambulance Association and to celebrate the dedication of EMS professionals across the state. Thank you for your service, your passion, and your commitment to excellence.

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Heroes of the Eaton Fire: California EMS Professionals Recognized with a Star of Life Award

A tribute to the quick thinking, selfless dedication, and unwavering commitment of California's ambulance services during the 2025 Eaton Fire disaster.

Sacramento CA 3/1/25 In January 2025, when the devastating Eaton Fire ravaged Southern California, EMS professionals from Falck Mobile Health and AmbuServe, Inc. (along with other Southern California EMS and Fire Services) displayed extraordinary courage, selflessness, and leadership. These individuals responded without hesitation to provide life-saving care and support, and their actions earned them the prestigious Star of Life award from the California Ambulance Association.

Their stories highlight the essence of service and commitment in the face of crisis.



Corey Martin
VP/Chief Admin
Officer
AmbuServe, Inc.

Corey Martin, a Critical Care Paramedic and VP/Chief Administrative Officer at AmbuServe Ambulance, displayed exceptional leadership and expertise throughout the Eaton Fire evacuation process. After a full day of work, Corey received an urgent call from Pasadena requesting assistance with evacuating a skilled nursing facility and an adjacent assisted living center that were directly in the path of the fire. Drawing from nearly three decades of experience, Corey quickly mobilized resources, coordinated an emergency meeting with the management team and dispatch, and recalled all available personnel. Within just 52 minutes, 25 units were on-site, actively evacuating 262 residents to safety. Corey's leadership didn't end there; once the evacuation was complete, he quickly shifted his attention to other facilities, including the Palisades Fire and another in Crescenta Valley. By the end of the week, his team had completed 647 patient movements, marking an

unprecedented effort. Corey's ability to manage such high-pressure situations while keeping his team focused and motivated was vital to ensuring the safety of hundreds of patients.



Chris Brito
EMT/FTO
Falck

Chris Brito, an EMT and Field Training Officer with Falck Mobile Health, immediately volunteered his services when the fire broke out. With extensive training in pre-hospital care, Chris worked alongside firefighters, paramedics, and other first responders to treat victims of the fire. His calm under pressure allowed him to handle various medical emergencies, from smoke inhalation to burns, while also assisting in evacuations and providing reassurance to distressed families. Chris's selflessness and expertise played a critical role in ensuring that victims received the care they needed, helping the community maintain its strength during this challenging time.



Alex Campos
EMT/FTO
Falck

Alex Campos, another EMT and Field Training Officer at Falck Mobile Health, was quick to step in alongside his colleague when the call for help went out. Alex's background in pre-hospital care and his deep commitment to public safety enabled him to provide critical medical assistance throughout the disaster. From treating burn victims and those suffering from smoke inhalation to helping evacuate those in harm's way, Alex's steady presence was a source of comfort for families in distress. His willingness to volunteer during such dangerous conditions was a powerful example of the courage and compassion that define the best in emergency medical services.

Basheer Khatib, an EMT and Field Training Officer at AmbuServe Ambulance, exemplified leadership when he was called to assist in the fire zone. Known for his

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Basheer Khatib
EMT/FTO
AmbuServe, Inc.

exceptional leadership and high standards across Orange County, Basheer responded immediately to the first request for help, joining the response efforts on the evening of January 7. Without hesitation, he entered the fire zone to assist with the evacuation of medically sensitive individuals who were trapped. His quick thinking and decisive actions helped ensure that many vulnerable citizens were safely evacuated from the danger. Basheer's calm in the face of adversity and his willingness to dive directly into the heart of the disaster helped save lives and support the overall evacuation efforts.



Matthew Perez
Training Division
Manager
AmbuServe, Inc.

Matthew Perez, the Training Division Manager at AmbuServe Ambulance, also stepped forward when the call for help came in. On the night of January 7th, as the Eaton Fire spread, Matthew received a frantic request from a nursing facility in immediate danger. Without hesitation, he donned his uniform and rushed to the scene. Entering a burning facility, he worked to evacuate patients and move them to safety. His leadership brought calm to the chaotic situation, reassuring both staff and patients in the face of overwhelming circumstances. Matthew's ability to guide responders and facility staff during this crisis was instrumental in ensuring the safe evacuation of many vulnerable individuals.

The heroism, quick thinking, and immediate action displayed by Chris Brito, Alex Campos, Basheer Khatib, Corey Martin, Matthew Perez, and others during the 2025 Eaton Fire exemplify the highest standards of emergency medical service. Their willingness to volunteer, lead under pressure, and remain unwaveringly committed to their communities during

this crisis are a testament to their professionalism and dedication. In the face of extreme danger, these EMS professionals not only saved lives but also played a critical role in ensuring the community's resilience and recovery. Their selfless actions continue to inspire and serve as a reminder of the critical role that California's ambulance services play in times of crisis. These teams have repeatedly proven their ability to mobilize swiftly and effectively during natural disasters, putting the needs of patients and the community first, and demonstrating that when it comes to protecting and serving the public, nothing stands in the way of their determination and compassion.

About the California Ambulance Association

Representing Health Care's Front-Line Providers – Founded in 1948, the California Ambulance Association (CAA) represents the interests of emergency and non-emergency ambulance service providers serving nearly every county of the state of California.

As healthcare's first responders, the Association is dedicated to assuring the delivery of excellent pre-hospital care to the people of California by promoting recognized industry best practices. *





Honoring the Heart of California’s EMS: Elizabeth Basnett’s Tribute to the State’s Heroes

At the 2025 California Ambulance Association Stars of Life event, EMSA Director Elizabeth Basnett highlights the dedication and resilience of California’s EMS professionals, urging them to continue their life-saving work despite the challenges they face.

Sacramento CA – 3.12.2025 At the 2025 California Ambulance Association (CAA) Stars of Life event, Director Elizabeth Basnett of the California Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA) delivered an inspiring keynote address, honoring the dedication and selflessness of California’s EMS professionals. The event, held in Sacramento, recognized 100 EMS heroes who have shown outstanding commitment to serving their communities.

Basnett’s address emphasized the critical role EMS staff play in the lives of Californians and visitors alike, and she began by acknowledging the often-underappreciated nature of EMS work. She shared a lighthearted anecdote about her own family’s occasional confusion about the specifics of her role, pointing out that even people close to her may not fully grasp the immense responsibility and expertise required in EMS. However, as she reminded the audience, every person in California has basic expectations: that when they call 911, someone will answer and that qualified professionals will arrive to provide the care they need.

“It is the only safety net program in the U.S. like this,” Basnett said, highlighting the immediacy of the EMS system. She referenced the swift responses that occur in urgent situations, like weather emergencies or medical crises, noting that this system is unlike any other public service, where help can be needed but not necessarily delivered quickly. EMS

is different: within minutes of a 911 call, emergency responders are there, ensuring safety, providing reassurance, and offering life-saving care.

She took a moment to thank those in the room for their daily commitment, regardless of their experience level, whether they were first-year EMTs or veterans with decades of service. “You are the beating heart of the safety net system,” Basnett affirmed. “Whether you’re just starting out or leading an ambulance company, you are such a critical part of this society.”

Basnett also acknowledged the unpredictable nature of EMS work, recognizing the challenges that come with entering situations where no two days are the same. From managing stress and uncertainty to dealing with emotionally difficult situations, EMS professionals demonstrate incredible strength and resilience. She encouraged everyone in the room to reflect on their own growth and the valuable role they play, despite the often-overlooked aspects of their job.

“I don’t think you all get enough credit,” Basnett continued, expressing deep gratitude for EMS staff who respond to emergencies, even when faced with difficult cases or recurring calls. She expressed appreciation for their commitment to the people they serve, noting that every patient, regardless of the circumstances, has loved ones who rely on them.

As she concluded her speech, Basnett offered words of encouragement for the future, acknowledging that the profession can be difficult, especially in a time when EMS workers may not always feel seen or appreciated. “Keep going,” she urged. “Don’t stop. Keep being the best in public service that you already are. Your efforts make a difference every single day.”

Basnett’s remarks resonated deeply with the audience, underscoring the dedication, resilience, and unwavering commitment of California’s EMS professionals. It was a powerful reminder of the essential role they play in ensuring the safety and well-being of communities across the state.

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Director Basnett's transcript in full:

CAA President Elect Steve Grau Introduction:

Liz is an amazing human being, besides everything that she has accomplished and let me read some of the stuff. Liz is the director of Emergency Medical Services Authority. That's the governing body that sets the rules and standards and really helps us be relevant, helps us connect with other entities in EMS, helps us set a standard, and all of you here raise that standard every day. Thank you for that as well.

Liz, appointed in August of 2023, but she's really served there since 2021. She has a strong background in emergency medical management. She previously served as a Chief Resilience officer at California Health and Human Services Agency and held key roles in emergency planning at Missouri State Emergency Management and New York Homeland Security Department.

Liz holds a master's in emergency and disaster management from Georgetown and Political Science degree from University of Missouri. Let's give her a warm welcome.

Director Elizabeth Basnett:

Hi, good morning. How's everyone? This is a good-looking group right here. I like all the uniforms.

So, I'm the director of the Emergency Medical Services Authority, so please don't take that as I try to make your job harder every day with all these regulations, I'm not sure we should. Shared that first thing.

But I am so honored to be here today. I think very rarely in my role do I actually get a chance to come and connect in this way, and it means so much to me. I think just start us off, right, I don't know how it is for your families, and maybe your families are super engaged in public service and you come from a long line of public servants, I did not, so even today, even on the way down here, my morning call to my mother. "Sorry, so it's emergency medical services, is that right? So, this is the ambulances, right?" – there's still, sometimes it's lack of understanding of even what I do, much less I think sometimes when you say what you do, folks don't really understand.

The depth of what that really means and so, as think about it, even as my role as director of EMSA, everybody, every single person that lives in the United States, every single person that lives in California. 280+ million visitors a year that come here to California, right, they have three basic expectations. They might not know how these expectations get met or what it

looks like, but their expectations are that if they call 911 for medical emergency, someone's going to answer the phone and someone's going to show up. Alright, that is the first basic assumption that we all, you all, do every day.

The second one is that – care, a qualified professional who's been trained, who knows how to do these things, is going to render some type of care or have a conversation, and ultimately folks are going to be transported if needed. I just want to take a step back for one second in case you haven't thought about this, this is the only safety net program in the US like this. This is the only one. If you need food stamps, if you need housing, if you need any other service, right, you're dealing with government – it takes a minute, it takes a minute to get help that you need. Then California Emergency Medical Services system is the only system where you can call someone, and within minutes, and we saw this during infant formula shortages, during COVID, the individual that's maybe a frequent utilizer because we know when the temperature drops below 40°, we're getting a 911 call, right?

You all, I just want to take a minute to acknowledge you are the ones in every community, every day that is providing that reassurance. That is reassurance for my family and my two young sons. Right, I know that if I call 911, someone will be there. I think sometimes folks lose that they lose that and all the things that are going on in this crazy world right now, which feels a little crazy – but at the end of the day, people still have this baseline assumption – I'm going to call my 911 and someone will be there, someone's going to come and someone is going to help me or my family or someone I love, or my neighbor.

So I just want to take a moment to say it is you all are the beating heart of that, whether you are your first year as an EMT, whether you are a 20 year veteran, whether you are leading an ambulance company, whether this is just a stepping stone to nursing school or whatever you want to do next, you are such a critical part of this society, and it is an honor to be the director of EMSA, It is an honor to be here today and to try to do things that make your life easier, which I know, we do some things that do not make your life easier (laughs)!

And so, really, I think that is what I want to lift up today. I also just want to acknowledge that every day isn't easy, right? You guys go into situations every day is unpredictable. I don't know if it's like this for you, but I go into my day and I'm going to get this done, this is on my list, I also need to call for my child and get

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this doctor's appointment – we have all this stuff ... and within 10 minutes, the whole plan for your day and what you thought was going to happen is unpredictable, and that says something about your character that you go into this field, whether this is stepping stone, that every single day you know, could lead you to anything, that says so much about your strength, and your resilience, and who you are as a public servant. And so really, I don't know if you all feel this, I don't know if people tell you thank you enough. And so really, that is what I am here to do this morning, is to just take a moment and I'm trying to look at every single one of you and just say thank you.

Thank you for your commitment to the safety net program that we all take for granted.

Thank you for your commitment to the patients, especially the ones that you've been to 40 times this month that are driving you bonkers. Thank you.

Thank you for rendering the lifesaving care that everyone's going to brag about today. That is someone's mother, son, brother, aunt uncle, grandparent. Thank you.

Your commitment is, especially in times of craziness, which feels like right now in our timeline of history, you are the thing

that makes everyone feel reassured – and I don't think you all get that credit enough, right?

And so I also just want to say not only thankful, but I'm also very grateful, and I think it says something – if I can just have a call to action, not that you already don't do plenty, but don't stop – It is difficult sometimes not being seen right, you come home from a long day and maybe you were on a cardiac arrest and maybe it didn't have a great patient outcome, or maybe something difficult happened and it is easy when folks are ungrateful and you read the news story, or you come home to maybe a family that doesn't understand.

Keep going, the days pass, but what you're doing every day, how you grow, how you evolve in public service and public leaders, you represent the best. Don't let any outside noise come in and get to you in any way. Keep moving forward every single day in your mission and your values for your journey and what you see for your future.

I just encourage you of anything worth having sometimes isn't easy to get to, and so I just encourage you don't stop. Continue to be the best in public service that you already are. Thank you all so much, thank you for letting me be here. *



CAA Membership is a Business Essential

The business environment, the healthcare sector and the EMS industry are evolving at an ever-increasing pace. At the CAA we are dedicated to providing members with the essential tools, information, resources, and solutions to help your organization grow and prosper. And, the CAA's collective efforts on statewide legislative and regulatory issues are not possible without strong membership support and engagement.

Take your place in California's statewide ambulance leadership

Membership not only saves you money on CAA events and resources, but also keeps you up to date on trends, innovations, and regulatory changes through:

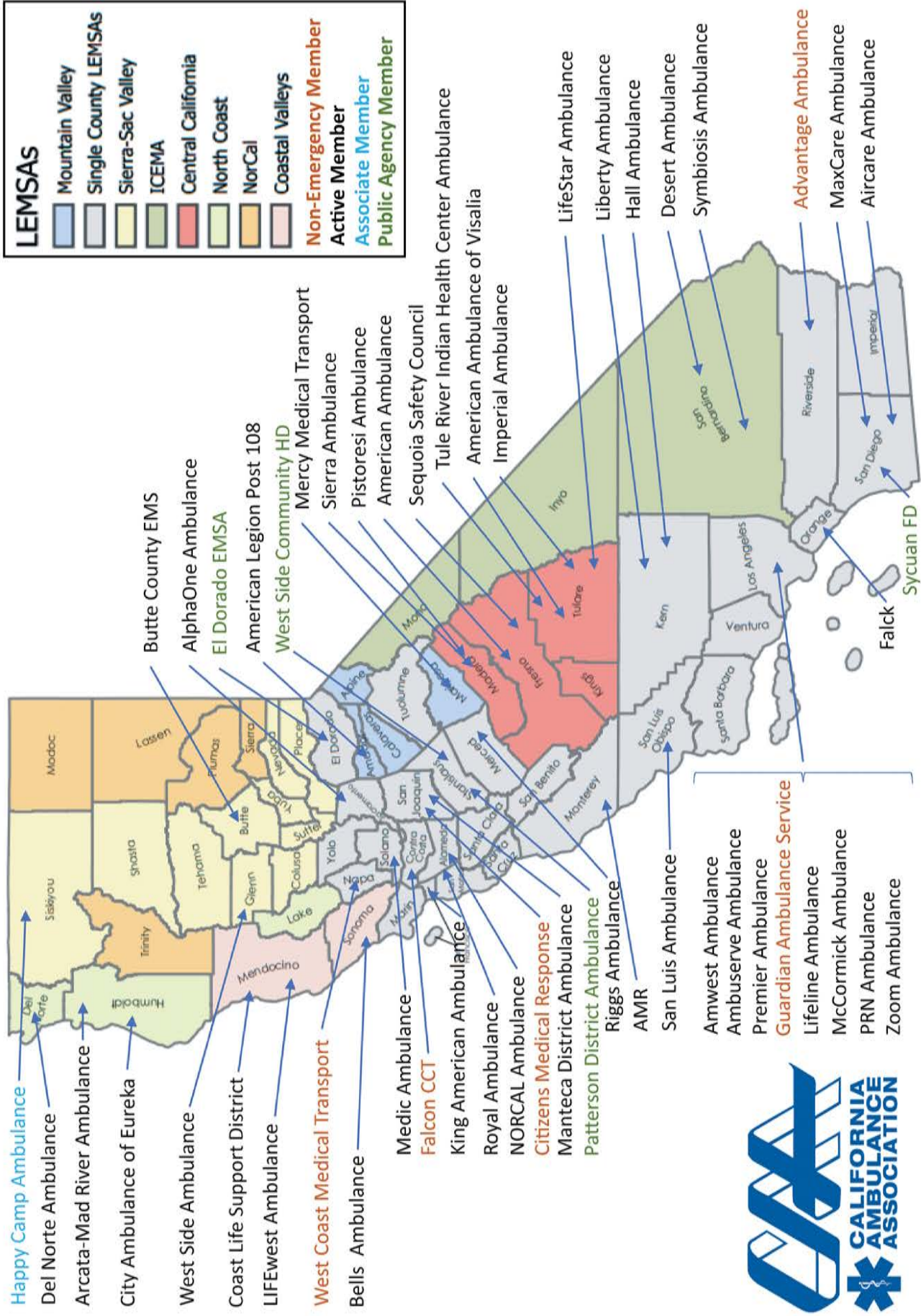
- Leadership on statewide legislative and regulatory issues
- Targeted conferences & educational programs
- Member-only updates and alerts
- Member-only discounts & access to expert resources
- Opportunities to exchange ideas with your colleagues statewide



Join the California Ambulance Association

Go to www.the-caa.org/join-the-caa for a membership application.

CAA Agency Location Map



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Southern California Ambulance Association Secures Measure B Grant Funding to Equip Licensed Ambulances in LA County with AEDs

Excellent news from our colleagues at the Southern California Ambulance Association:

The Southern California Ambulance Association (SCAA) is proud to announce the successful acquisition of Measure B grant funding to provide Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) to every participating licensed ambulance in Los Angeles County. This significant achievement addresses a critical gap in emergency medical care by equipping private ambulance services, which are often responsible for interfacility transports, with life-saving defibrillation technology.

Historically, private ambulance companies operating in Los Angeles County were not required to carry AEDs on Basic Life Support (BLS) ambulances, which posed a potential barrier to providing immediate care, particularly in life-threatening situations such as cardiac arrest. With the acquisition of this funding, many BLS ambulances in the county will now be outfitted with AEDs, enabling EMTs to deliver immediate, life-saving defibrillation on scene.

"This initiative is a game changer for public safety in Los Angeles County," said Chad Druten, President of the Southern California Ambulance Association. "This is an important step forward in ensuring that all EMS providers, regardless of their service model, have the tools necessary to save lives. AEDs are an essential part of the emergency medical toolkit, and this initiative helps ensure that every ambulance in LA County is equipped to respond to cardiac emergencies, no matter where they occur."

Richard Tadeo, Director of Los Angeles County Emergency Medical Services Agency, added, "The addition of AEDs to most licensed ambulances in LA County will greatly enhance our ability to deliver life-saving care during critical moments. This program is an example of how public-private partnerships can improve outcomes for patients. We are thrilled to support the SCAA membership on this initiative, which will ultimately increase the level of EMS within the county."

Sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) can happen anywhere, and the survival rate for SCA victims increases significantly with rapid defibrillation. According to the American Heart Association, the chances of survival drop by 7-10% for every minute that passes without defibrillation. Studies have shown that bystander CPR, when combined with an AED, can double or triple a person's

chance of survival from sudden cardiac arrest. In fact, AEDs are now required in federal buildings, with clear evidence that their use, along with bystander CPR, drastically improves survival rates for victims of cardiac arrest.

With this new initiative, having AEDs onboard nearly 95% of ambulances in LA County means that EMS providers can deliver timely defibrillation – an essential intervention for patients experiencing cardiac arrest – when combined with high-quality CPR and advanced care from EMTs.

Through Measure B funding, the SCAA is ensuring that Emergency Medical Services across Los Angeles County are equipped with the tools necessary to provide the best care possible in some of the most critical situations. This initiative underscores the importance of collaboration and innovation in Emergency Medical Services, and the SCAA is committed to continuing to advance the quality of care for all residents of Los Angeles County. *

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What You Need to Know About Recently Passed EMS Legislation

CAA Legislative & Agency Relations Committee

The Legislative & Agency Relations Committee have compiled a list of recently passed bills with a brief description and suggested CAA member action to remain in compliance with these new laws. Members are also encouraged to visit the CAA member only area of the CAA website and review the extended Town Hall broadcast for February 2025, where CAA Committee leaders discussed these laws and others in greater detail

Peer Support for EMS Personnel AB2859 (1/1/25)

Authorizes an EMS provider to establish a peer support and crisis referral program to provide a network of peer representatives available to aid fellow employees on emotional or professional issues. EMS personnel, whether or not a party to an action, have a right to refuse to disclose, and to prevent another from disclosing, a confidential communication between the EMS personnel and a peer support team member, crisis hotline, or crisis referral service, except under limited circumstances, including, among others, if disclosure is reasonably believed to be necessary to prevent death, substantial bodily harm, or commission of a crime, or in a civil or criminal proceeding. The bill would also provide that, except for an action for medical malpractice, a peer support team member and the EMS provider that employs them are not liable for damages, as specified, relating to an act, error, or omission in performing peer support services, unless the act, error, or omission constitutes gross negligence or intentional misconduct.

Action Needed

- Authorizes an optional peer support program.
- For the confidentiality protections, have the peer support team members complete a training course or courses on peer support approved by the EMS provider. See the law for specific details on training program requirements.
- Implement the peer support program through a labor-management agreement negotiated separately and apart from a collective bargaining agreement covering affected emergency medical personnel.
- Ensure the sessions provided by a peer support program do not count toward the total number of mental health treatments per issue required by Section 884 of the Labor Code.

Emergency Ambulance Employees AB 1843 (1/1/25)

Same as AB2859 but requires an ambulance provider to offer peer support services upon the employee's request.

Action Needed

- Requires a peer support program.
- Requirements are the same as AB2859.

Discovery: Personnel Review Committees AB 2225 (1/1/25)

For purposes of civil proceedings only, exempts proceedings and records of emergency medical services prehospital emergency medical care person or personnel organized committees from discovery as evidence the proceedings and records of specified organized committees of health care professionals and review

committees having the responsibility of evaluation and improvement of the quality of care.

If a person in attendance at a meeting of any of the committees described shall not be required to testify as to what transpired at that meeting. The prohibition does not apply if a person serves upon the committee when his or her own conduct or practice is being reviewed.

Added to existing Section 1157 of the Evidence Code

Action Needed

- This is a privilege to protect the QI process exempting document discovery and a testimony exemption when participating in an established, organized committee.
- A person in attendance at a meeting of any of the committees described in subdivision shall not be required to testify as to what transpired at that meeting.

Healthcare Coverage: EMS SB 1180 (1/1/25)

Requires a health care service plan to establish a process to reimburse for services provided by a CP program, a TAD program, and a mobile integrated health program.

Requires an enrollee or insured who receives covered services from a noncontracting program to pay no more than the same cost-sharing amount that they would pay for the same covered services received from a contracting program. The bill would prohibit reimbursement rates adopted pursuant to this provision from exceeding

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the health care service plan's or health insurer's usual and customary charges for services rendered.

Because a willful violation of these provisions by a health care service plan would be a crime, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

Makes services provided by these programs covered benefits under the Medi-Cal program. The bill would condition this Medi-Cal coverage on an appropriation, receipt of any necessary federal approvals, and the availability of federal financial participation.

No Service Fees for Credit Cards SB478 (7/1/24)

Passed in 2023; nicknamed the "Honest Pricing Law," this is a price transparency bill which disallows businesses from hidden fees (i.e. a service fee for using a credit card). The text of the law can be found at section 1770(a)(29) of the California Civil Code.

Action Needed

- Review credit card policy to verify compliance when accepting credit card payments.

(Provided by Payer Issues Committee)

Elimination of Credit Reporting for Medical Debt SB 478 (7/1/24)

Medical debt can no longer be reported onto a person's consumer credit report (an exception exists if the person received the payment from the insurance and failed to repay the medical provider).

A holder of this medical debt contract is prohibited by Section 1785.27 of the Civil Code from furnishing any information related to this debt to a consumer credit reporting agency. In addition to any other penalties allowed by law, if a person knowingly violates that section by furnishing information regarding this debt to a consumer credit reporting agency,

the debt shall be void and unenforceable. Without this language the debt could be determined void and unenforceable.

Action Needed

- Ensure no Medical debt on credit reports effective 1/1/25 (requires ambulance providers to change tactics on bad debt).
- Validate with billing office exception to "no medical debt" for situations where patient is paid direct by insurance.
- Review patient signature language and patient statement language to ensure compliance. Add new specific contract language from SB1061 bills to patients effective 7/1/25 (requires ambulance providers to update signature language AND invoice bills).
- Partner/educate provider collection agency to ensure collection agency is following the law.

(Provided by Payer Issues Committee) *

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The Senate



Welcome to the New Members of the California State Legislature

The California Ambulance Association extends a warm welcome to the newly elected members of the California State Assembly and Senate. Your dedication to public service is commendable, and we look forward to working with you to enhance emergency medical services across the state.

New Members of the California State Senate

Christopher Cabaldon (District 3, Democratic, West Sacramento) – Replacing Bill Dodd

Jerry McNerney (District 5, Democratic, Stockton) – Replacing Susan Eggman

Jesse Arreguín (District 7, Democratic, Berkeley) – Replacing Nancy Skinner

Tim Grayson (District 9, Democratic, Concord) – Replacing Steve Glazer

Suzette Martinez Valladares (District 23, Republican, Santa Clarita) – Replacing Rosilicie Ochoa Bogh

Sasha Renée Pérez (District 25, Democratic, Alhambra) – Replacing Anthony Portantino

Laura Richardson (District 35, Democratic, Long Beach) – Replacing Steven Bradford

Steven Choi (District 37, Republican, Irvine) – Replacing Dave Min

Akilah Weber (District 39, Democratic, San Diego) – Replacing Toni Atkins

We are eager to collaborate with each of you to ensure that Californians receive the highest quality emergency medical services. Your leadership and commitment are vital as we navigate the challenges and opportunities ahead. 🌟

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The Assembly



New Members of the California State Assembly

Heather Hadwick (District 1, Republican, Dorris) – Replacing Megan Dahle

Chris Rogers (District 2, Democratic, Santa Rosa) – Replacing Jim Wood

Maggy Krell (District 6, Democratic, Sacramento) – Replacing Kevin McCarty

Rhodesia Ransom (District 13, Democratic, Tracy) – Replacing Carlos Villapudua

Anamarie Avila Farias (District 15, Democratic, Martinez) – Replacing Tim Grayson

Catherine Stefani (District 19, Democratic, San Francisco) – Replacing Phil Ting

Liz Ortega (District 20, Democratic, San Leandro) – Replacing Bill Quirk

Diane Papan (District 21, Democratic, San Mateo) – Replacing Kevin Mullin

Patrick Ahrens (District 26, Democratic, TBD) – Replacing Evan Low

Vacant (District 32, TBD, TBD) – Replacing Vince Fong

Alexandra Macedo (District 33, Republican, Tulare) – Replacing Devon Mathis

Jeff Gonzalez (District 36, Republican, Indio) – Replacing Eduardo Garcia

John Harabedian (District 41, Democratic, Sierra Madre) – Replacing Chris Holden

Celeste Rodriguez (District 43, Democratic, San Fernando) – Replacing Luz Rivas

Nick Schultz (District 44, Democratic, Burbank) – Replacing Laura Friedman

Robert Garcia (District 50, Democratic, Rancho Cucamonga) – Replacing Eloise Reyes

Jessica Caloza (District 52, Democratic, Los Angeles) – Replacing Wendy Carrillo

Mark Gonzalez (District 54, Democratic, TBD) – Replacing Miguel Santiago

Sade Elhawary (District 57, Democratic, Los Angeles) – Replacing Reggie Jones-Sawyer

Leticia Castillo (District 58, Republican, TBD) – Replacing Sabrina Cervantes

LaShae Sharp-Collins (District 79, Democratic, TBD) – Replacing Akilah Weber



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