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April 6, 2007

The Honorable Sheila Kuehl, Chair  
Senate Health Committee  
State Capitol, Room 5108  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**SUBJECT: SB 583/RIDLEY-THOMAS – OPPOSE UNLESS AMENDED**

Dear Senator Kuehl:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the recent amendments to SB 583. Thank you for addressing our concerns relative to retaining a medical director's ability to address a public safety EMT certification discipline. The proposed amendments go a long way in addressing our concerns; however, due to the inclusion of the language "related to patient care," EMSAAC must still continue to oppose SB 583 unless amended.

Specifically, EMSAAC strongly recommends eliminating "related to patient care" from all the language relating to discipline in Section 4, (a) (2) and (4). We believe that this language should be deleted and simply refer to (c) which is the list of all grounds for disciplinary actions for EMT-I, EMT-II, and paramedic personnel. The inclusion of "related to patient care" is so restrictive that it permits non-reporting and inability to administer appropriate discipline for serious offenses that may pose a threat to the public health and safety. It also will put the burden of proof upon the local EMS agency medical director and the EMS Authority director to show exactly how the act is related to patient care. For instance, one of the grounds listed in (c) is misusing narcotics or other controlled substance, but with the "related to patient care" language if the medical director cannot prove that the EMT was under the influence while caring for a patient it will make it very difficult to take appropriate disciplinary action on the EMT's certification.

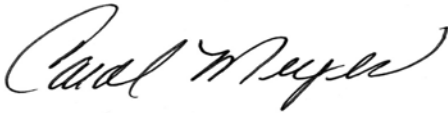
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We are supportive of transferring EMT certification to the EMS Authority, including certification discipline and appreciate your amendments in SB 583 that transfer the disciplinary process to the Authority. We are hopeful that more comprehensive EMT certification legislation will be forthcoming in the current legislative session. Such legislation should address State EMT I licensure, mandatory background checks, and standardized disciplinary procedures as currently exist for paramedics.

During last year's legislative session, a task force representing all constituency groups reached consensus on major issues for comprehensive EMT I legislation. Unfortunately those agreements were not incorporated into legislative language last year. The State Emergency Medical Services Commission (EMSC), supported by all major EMS constituency groups, is reconvening the task force to develop suggestions for comprehensive EMT legislation. EMSAAC supports the efforts of the EMSC and suggests that any legislative efforts await the work of the EMSC task force.

We very much appreciate your efforts to amend SB 583 to address our concerns. We pledge to continue to work with legislators, their staff, and all groups to ensure legislation that will protect the public health and safety.

Very truly yours,



Carol Meyer  
President

cc: The Honorable Mark Ridley-Thomas, Member, California State Senate  
Members, Senate Health Committee  
Concepcion Todeo, Consultant, Senate Health Committee  
Joe Parra, Senate Republican Caucus Consultant  
Ana Matasantos, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of the Governor  
Jennifer Kent, Associate Secretary, Office of Legislative Affairs,  
California Health & Human Services Agency