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April 25, 2007

The Honorable Tom Torlakson, Chair
Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 5050
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: SB 583/RIDLEY-THOMAS – OPPOSE UNLESS AMENDED
Set for hearing April 30, 2007

Dear Senator Torlakson:

The Emergency Medical Services Administrators Association of California has taken an oppose unless amended position on SB 583/Ridley-Thomas. EMSAAC represents the local emergency medical services agencies (LEMSAs) that coordinate and regulate the delivery of emergency medical services in California.

As written, this legislation will impede the local EMS Agency Medical Director from safeguarding patients. The proposed language requires that any certification discipline action on a public safety EMT must be “directly related to patient care”. This puts the burden of proof upon the EMS Agency Director to show that the action of the EMT was directly related to patient care. For instance, if an EMT has been convicted of sexual assault or theft but the victim was not a patient, the EMS Agency Medical Director will have to prove that the EMT might take such an action on a patient. EMSAAC continues to believe that the inclusion of “directly related to patient care” language threatens our Medical Directors abilities to act upon certifications that potentially threaten a vulnerable population.

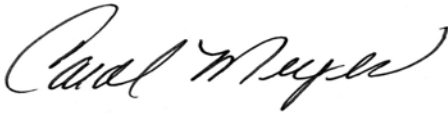
SB 583 is addressing potential changes in EMT discipline only, and only for a portion of EMT’s within the State. This represents a piecemeal approach and ensures a double standard in applying measures to ensure

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the public safety. We agree with legislation that includes comprehensive language changes in EMT certification and discipline. Such legislation should address State EMT licensure, mandatory background checks and standardized disciplinary procedures as currently exists for paramedics. Senator Ashburn's SB 254 takes a more comprehensive approach to EMT licensure and discipline. Furthermore, SB 254 appears to include language developed by a broad-based EMT licensure workgroup that met during last year's legislative session.

We urge that system wide needs be addressed comprehensively and not in the piecemeal fashion in the current version of SB 583. We pledge to continue to work with legislators, their staff, and all groups to ensure legislation that will protect vulnerable patients that depend on prehospital care.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Carol Meyer".

Carol Meyer
President

cc: The Honorable Mark Ridley-Thomas, Member, California State Senate
Members, Senate Appropriations Committee
John Miller, Consultant, Senate Appropriations Committee
Seren Taylor, Senate Republican Caucus Fiscal Director
Ana Matasantos, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of the Governor
Jennifer Kent, Associate Secretary, Office of Legislative Affairs,
California Health & Human Services Agency