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Assemblymember Rodriguez Introduces Crucial Legislation to Increase the Reimbursement Rate for Private Ambulance Providers

(Sacramento, CA) – Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez (D – Pomona) has introduced AB 55, which would require the reimbursement rate for private emergency ground transport providers to be increased to \$350 per transport. This bill would also require each local emergency medical services agency (LEMSA) to determine a local prevailing wage for EMTs and require private ambulance employers to compensate those employees accordingly.

“Over the past 30 years that I have served as a first responder, our Medi-Cal reimbursement rate has not been steadily increased to reflect the current times. EMTs and ambulance providers are a vital part of our emergency management and response operations, and they must be compensated accordingly,” **stated Assemblymember Rodriguez.**

Decades of below-cost Medi-Cal reimbursement, combined with Medi-Cal expansion, is crippling California’s ability to recruit and retain qualified emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and paramedics. While California has recently expanded Medi-Cal, there is a clear need to examine further and develop our healthcare delivery and emergency medical response systems.

California ranks 46th in the nation for ambulance Medi-Cal reimbursement. As a state that typically leads the nation, we must recognize this disparity and increase the rate for our providers who already sacrifice so much. Medi-Cal only reimburses private ambulance providers at rates that were established in 2011. As these reimbursement rates have remained static, EMT salaries have as well.

As California works to provide pay parity and more equitable Medi-Cal reimbursement rates for health care services, EMTs and ambulance providers must be part of the conversation and solution to ensuring a robust health care and emergency management system throughout California.

“Current Medi-Cal reimbursement rates do not even cover ambulance transport costs. Providing ambulance services in California comes with the highest cost nationwide. The reimbursement rate must reflect those costs so our providers can offer competitive wages and benefits, bringing sustainable funding to the program. I will not stop working toward the goal of increased reimbursement until we achieve it,” **added Assemblymember Rodriguez.**

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Assemblymember Rodriguez ([Twitter](#)) represents the 53rd Assembly District which includes the cities of Chino, Montclair, Ontario, Pomona, and Upland. He is Chair of the Assembly Committee on Emergency Management.