



Date: April 19, 2023

Contact: Taylor Gonsalves

Phone: (916) 319-2053

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Assemblymember Rodriguez Advances Legislation to Alleviate Extended Ambulance Patient Offload Times

(Sacramento, CA) – Last night, Assembly Bill (AB) 40, authored by Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez (D – Pomona), passed out of the Assembly Committee on Health with a vote of 15-0. This legislation would require the California Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA) to take urgent actions to address the chronic issue of ambulance patient offload time (APOT), which is also known as “wall time.”

“Having served as a first responder for over 30 years, I know that the issue of extended wall times is not new and has been impacting the EMS system for decades. Over 20 years ago, I waited on the wall for more than 12 hours, and colleagues have recently informed me that they are still battling extended wall times. This is unacceptable, and we must implement a standard to get our first responders off the wall and back out responding to their next call,” **stated Assemblymember Rodriguez.**

When residents call 9-1-1 in a medical emergency, they expect immediate emergency transport and a hospital ready to treat them. Unfortunately, this is not the reality in many hospitals statewide, as a patient could wait several hours before being seen by medical staff.

Among the urgent actions AB 40 would require all LEMSAs to establish an APOT standard of no more than 30 minutes and require general acute care hospitals with emergency departments to meet that standard 90% of the time. Additionally, hospitals would be required to develop an APOT reduction protocol by June 1, 2024, file the protocol with EMSA and require EMSA to monitor monthly APOT data to ensure the standard is being met.

According to a 2020 EMSA report, roughly 70,000 Californians wait over an hour on an ambulance gurney once they arrive at the hospital before the emergency department staff assumes their care and they are moved to an emergency bed. Meanwhile, emergency transport staff cannot respond to other emergencies, and patients suffer due to untimely access to medical care.

“Extended wall times impact everyone in our emergency medical system as first responders are unable to respond to their next call, the patient they are currently waiting to offload does not receive timely care, and the next patient calling in a life-threatening situation cannot be picked up and transported expeditiously. Patients deserve better, and concrete policies must be adopted to alleviate this issue and ensure timely care,” **added Assemblymember Rodriguez.**

###

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.