



Washington *Update*

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Save the Date for NAEMT "EMS on the Hill Day"

NAEMT is sponsoring its first EMS on the Hill Day on May 3-4, 2010 in Washington, DC. This will be a wonderful opportunity to showcase the importance of emergency medical services on Capitol Hill and AEMS encourages your participation. Click [here](#) for more information.

Health Care Reform Negotiations Resume as White House Convenes "Summit"

Status Update

Following the January 19 shake-up Senate election in Massachusetts, Congressional activity on health reform legislation came to a halt as Senate Democrats no longer possessed the necessary 60 votes to prevent a filibuster by the minority party on the controversial legislation. In an attempt to break the impasse, the Obama Administration hosted a bipartisan health reform summit with Congressional leaders last week. Prior to the Summit, the White House issued its [health reform package](#), which builds on the legislation passed by the Senate on December 24 and incorporates specific Republican reform proposals to help garner the support of the minority party.

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) will likely introduce a bill that includes some of the provisions discussed during the summit, and amends the Senate bill with changes that have been agreed to by House and Senate negotiators. The Senate will then consider the bill under "reconciliation," a process that requires only 51 votes to pass the bill in the Senate (rather than 60 votes that are needed to overcome a Republican filibuster). This bill, as well as the underlying Senate bill that passed the chamber in December, will then move to the House for its consideration. Should the House approve both bills, they will then be sent to the President for his signature. AEMS will keep you informed as

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President Obama Outlines Priorities in FY 2011 Budget Request

On February 1, the Obama Administration submitted to Congress its \$3.8 trillion budget proposal for fiscal year (FY) 2011. AEMS has updated its [federal funding chart](#) to reflect the proposed amounts for programs of interest to AEMS supporters. While non-binding, the budget offers an annual opportunity for Congress and the President to publicly establish their policy and funding priorities for the year

Of particular note is the fact that the Homeland Security budget proposes to reform the organization of State and Local Programs by consolidating smaller grant programs like the Citizens Corps and Interoperable Emergency Communications Grant programs and incorporating them as "allowable expenses" under the State Homeland Security Grant

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developments warrant on the overall health reform bill, and the key provisions of interest to AEMS supporters, which are outlined below.

Medicare Ambulance Payments

Both the House and Senate health reform bills contain extensions of the 2 percent (urban) and 3 percent (rural) ambulance increases that expired on December 31, 2009 and were not set to be reinstated until April of this year. The Senate bill also contains an extension of the super rural bonus payments through calendar year 2010. These are among a number of expiring rural payments that will need to be extended either through health reform, or through a separate legislative measure if necessary. For example, Senate Majority Leader Reid (D-NV) is currently circulating [draft legislative language](#), which will likely be introduced as a bill that the Senate will take up sometime before the Easter Recess. AEMS is pleased to report that the current draft includes extensions of Medicare ambulance relief and the super rural bonus payments through January 1, 2011. (Section begins on page 55). AEMS continues to support AAA and other EMS advocacy organizations in pushing for these extensions and will continue to work to ensure that the time without the relief is minimized and that relief is retroactive to January 1, 2010.

EMS and Trauma Provisions

The Senate health reform bill included the following EMS and trauma related programs of interest to the emergency medical services community:

- A grant program for four pilots for regionalized systems of emergency care, consistent with the IOM recommendations in 2006, as well as reauthorization of the trauma systems planning grants; and
- \$200 million in authorized funding for:
 - Trauma Center Grants, which directly fund trauma centers; and
 - Trauma Service Availability Grants, which specifically provide grant funds to states to support trauma centers, including funding for helipads and related capital safety infrastructure, as well as for expedient receipt of trauma patients by ground and air.

The two trauma grant programs were originally contained in [S. 733](#), as sponsored by Senators Patty Murray (D-WA) and Johnny Isakson (R-GA). This language was later incorporated into the Senate health reform bill, along with the addition of the regional pilot program grants. Advocates for EMS has worked collaboratively with several EMS and trauma related organizations to ensure the inclusion of the regional pilot programs and trauma provisions in the Senate health reform bill. The EMS and trauma provisions in the health reform bill begin on page 1081.

AEMS is very pleased that the House health reform bill also includes the regional pilot programs and \$100 million for trauma center funding, but notes that the funding approaches are different between the House and Senate. AEMS is continuing to work on these provisions, which have received bipartisan support, toward ensuring their inclusion in the final health reform legislation, however it is completed.

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Program. As a result, the Administration is proposing to increase funding for the State Homeland Security Grant Program from \$890 million to \$1.05 billion in FY 2011. In addition, funding for the Metropolitan Medical Response System and the Interoperable Emergency Communications Grant programs will be treated as “allowable expenses” within the Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI). Accordingly, the Administration has also proposed to increase UASI funding from \$887 million in FY 2010 to \$1.1 billion in FY 2011.

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It should also be noted that the Assistance to Firefighter Grants (AFG) program, the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) program and the Fire Prevention and Safety (FP&S) program have all been rolled into the Firefighter Assistance Grants program. Overall, the Administration proposes to reduce funding for the Firefighter Assistance Grants program from \$810 million to \$610 million in FY 2011.

AEMS has been advocating on Capitol Hill for full funding of EMS-related programs and will continue these efforts as the House and Senate Budget Committees begin to prepare their FY 2011 budget proposals. [Click here](#) for a copy of AEMS' FY 2011 Priority Funding document, which is described in further detail in the "AEMS Agenda" article on page 4.

Report Language Used for Grant Guidance

DHS recently released its FY 2010 Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) [guidance](#), which applies to a number of grant programs that impact EMS, including the State Homeland Security Program; Urban Areas Security Initiative; Operation Stonegarden; Metropolitan Medical Response System; and Citizen Corps Program. The guidance included many changes for EMS providers that reflect multi-agency collaboration, including a joint DHS-HHS Grants Coordinating Committee, as well as input from FICEMS and others.

AEMS is pleased to report that the guidance adopts language that AEMS and AAA had worked with the House Appropriations Committee to include in the FY 2010 Homeland Security bill. This guidance requires State and local governments to include EMS providers in their State and Urban Area homeland security plans. The grantees are directed to include "a minimum number of quantitative and qualitative measures necessary to demonstrate achievement with regard to improving EMS system integration with public health systems." The measures can include "establishment of a recognized EMS medical direction program, establishment of a National EMS Information System (NEMSIS) compliant electronic documentation system, and other appropriate preparedness measures." The guidance further emphasizes the importance of creating or utilizing existing governing bodies to coordinate grant resources and act on the guidance. Such bodies include State Senior Advisory Committees, which should include representatives of the State EMS Director's office. AEMS commends the Department of Homeland Security in issuing the new guidance to include EMS providers.

Commission Releases Report Card on U.S. Bioterrorism Readiness

The Congressionally-appointed Commission on the Prevention of Weapons of Mass Destruction Proliferation and Terrorism has released a report card assessing the U.S. government's progress in protecting the country against a terrorist attack. The report, entitled: [Prevention of WMD Proliferation and Terrorism Report Card](#) found that the United States is still unprepared to respond a biological terrorist attack.

[Click here](#) to view the report card.

FICEMS National EMS and 9-1-1 Stakeholders Meeting, March 17-18

The Federal Interagency Committee on Emergency Medical Services (FICEMS) is conducting a National EMS and 9-1-1 Stakeholders meeting on March 17-18 in Washington, DC. Information is available at www.ems.gov. AEMS will be attending the meeting and will provide updated information to Advocates Supporters following its occurrence.

AEMS Agenda for 2010

The Advocates for EMS Board has adopted a Strategic Plan and a specific 2010 Action Plan, which outline steps the Association plans to undertake to help Capitol Hill and the Administration better understand the importance of EMS and the challenges that EMS providers face. The Strategic Plan focuses on three areas: Advocacy, Communications and Development.

Advocacy: AEMS is concentrating its advocacy in two areas: 1) the development of a Field EMS bill, and 2) ensuring strong federal funding for EMS programs through the annual federal appropriations process.

- Legislation: The purpose of the Field EMS bill is to achieve NHTSA and IOM's visions of developing a mature, accountable, high quality, evidenced-based and cost-effective EMS system for patients in all situations ranging from catastrophic events (biological, pandemic, blast-attack, earthquake) to daily treatment and transport of emergency medical conditions. The legislation seeks to implement key recommendations of EMS Agenda for the Future, EMS Research Agenda, EMS Workforce Agenda, EMS Education Agenda, and other recommendations of the FICEMS, IOM and NEMSAC. The legislation is premised on building and strengthening the key attributes of the EMS System of 2020 (Quality, Workforce, Accountability, Safety, and Finance) to strengthen preparedness for catastrophic events and align the delivery of Field EMS to evidenced based medicine that improves patient outcomes and promotes cost-effective interventions that produce downstream savings to the health care system. The bill is currently in the drafting phase; we look forward to sharing a comprehensive draft with Advocates supporters in the near future.
- Appropriations Funding: We are also working to advance federal appropriations requests for EMS priority programs and have developed a [FY 2011 Priority Funding document for Advocates Supporters](#), which describes our priorities and includes the updated federal funding chart based on the President's budget proposal. We appreciate your assistance in asking your Members of Congress to support full funding for the programs described in this document.

Communications: We are in the process of developing a media strategy to raise the profile of EMS.

Development: Tools and materials are being developed to grow our base of Advocates Supporters.

Updated Information on the Advocates for EMS Policy Summit!

Time/Location:

Thursday, March 4, 2010, 3:00-5:00 p.m.

Baltimore Convention Center, Room 350, Baltimore, MD

Confirmed Participating Federal Officials:

- Richard Hunt, M.D., Centers for Disease Control, HHS
- Michael Handrigan, M.D., Emergency Care Coordination Center, HHS
- Rick Patrick, Office of Health Affairs, DHS
- Mike Stern, U.S. Fire Administration, DHS
- Drew Dawson, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT

Session:

Please join Advocates for EMS and honored Federal Officials for an interactive discussion about policies affecting EMS providers. You will have the opportunity to learn about critical issues facing the EMS community and share your input on the opportunities and challenges you face in providing emergency medical care every day. Previous EMS Summits have led to both policy and law changes, so your voice does count!

Reception:

The session will be followed by a reception from 5:00-6:00 p.m. in the Camden Lobby.