



≡ CARLSON AMBULANCE TRANSPORT SERVICE INC.

1642 Pearl Road Brunswick, Ohio 44212 (330) 225-2400

April 14, 2016

Dear Chairman Burke, Vice Chairwoman Manning, Ranking Member Cafaro and members of the Senate Medicaid Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony regarding the state of the Ohio ambulance and medical transportation industry. My name is Patrick Carlson and I am the President of Carlson Ambulance Transport Service.

My family started ambulance services in 1952. Before government involvement, we were paid on a person's ability to pay. Government, attorneys, insurance companies have been changing every bit of transporting ill people except the tires of the transport vehicle.

I've stayed in this business because of heart. Frankly, the profit margin is so low, motor vehicle or engine emission costs could force me out. How are you going to transport the "baby bubble" without private companies that could not afford to keep the doors open? The "fire departments" won't be able to save emergency transports if they are busy with nursing home patients. Who will be taking stretcher cases from the hospital to the nursing and private homes?

The undoing is easy, no increases. I won't lose sleep over it, I tried to explain how vital our service is. Without us, well that's a wild guess.

Ohio's Medicaid reimbursements for ambulance transport are significantly lower than Medicaid rates in all the surrounding states, except Kentucky, and well below the national averages. Ohio's rates result in losses of \$35 to over \$300 per trip, as reported by a statewide industry survey. Losses for both emergency and rural transports are even greater.

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) has verified in two (2) separate reports that the Medicaid reimbursement for ambulance transport is below cost; further validating the assertion that Ohio's Medicaid rates for ambulance transport are dangerously low and unsustainable for providers. Low reimbursement for BLS-ALS and

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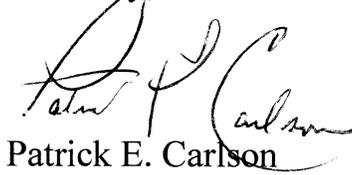
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MICU transport (mandate a nurse on board without additional Ohio Medicaid reimbursement) endangers timely arrival and quality of care for Ohioans. In the statewide industry survey, wheelchair van (ambulette) transports were reported as costing 200% over Medicaid reimbursements, a loss of nearly \$60 per transport.

The Ohio Ambulance and Medical Transportation Association (OAMTA) is seeking an across the board rate increase, which I support. Without a rate increase, an extremely vulnerable population will be put under further duress as their care will continue to suffer while additional ambulance and transportation facilities shutter their doors.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions you might have and I thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Patrick E. Carlson". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Patrick E. Carlson

President