



Extend Public Safety Officer Benefit to Include Ambulance and Air Medical Crews

Congress established the Public Safety Officer Benefit to provide assistance to the survivors of police, fire and emergency medical services (EMS) personnel in the event of their death in the line of duty. The benefit, however, currently only applies to those public safety officers employed by a federal, state, and local government entity. The Department of Justice, which administers the program, made an exception after September 11, when five EMS personnel employed by nongovernmental ambulance agencies died in the collapse of the World Trade Center.

Since the national tragedy of September 11, Americans have witnessed a renewed appreciation for the important community service of firefighters, police, and EMS personnel. Many communities around the U.S. have chosen to have their emergency medical services provided by nongovernmental and volunteer firefighters, ground and air ambulance crew members, and first responders. Unfortunately, the firefighter, ambulance service and first responder personnel employed by these services are not currently eligible for death benefits under the PSOB program.

Nongovernmental public safety officers provide identical services to governmental officers and do so daily in the same dangerous environments. The *Nongovernmental Emergency Responder Family Protection Act* would clarify that the PSOB program covers nongovernmental and volunteer public safety officers who provide emergency medical and ground or air ambulance service, fire protection and suppression and first responder services. These professionals protect and promote the public good of the communities they serve. It is unfair to penalize nongovernmental public safety officers and their families simply because their employer is a nongovernmental agency.

According to the National EMS Memorial Service, approximately 400 medics have died in the line of duty since 1993. While the totals differ significantly from year to year, the average number of medic deaths per year is 25 with about half of those being employed by nongovernmental agencies. As of October 1, 2008, the death benefit is \$315,746. To expand the benefit based on an average of 12 line-of-duty nongovernmental medic deaths would cost approximately \$3.79 million a year.

Please contact any of the associations listed below for more information.

American Ambulance Association
 8400 Westpark Drive, Second Floor
 McLean, VA 22102
 (202) 486-4888

Association of Air Medical Services
 526 King Street, Suite 415
 Alexandria, Virginia 22314-3143
 (703) 836-8732

**National Association of Emergency
 Medical Technicians**
 PO Box 1400 Clinton, MS 39060-1400
 1-800-34-NAEMT

Supporting State & Regional Organizations:



Kansas EMS Association



Michigan Association of Ambulance Services



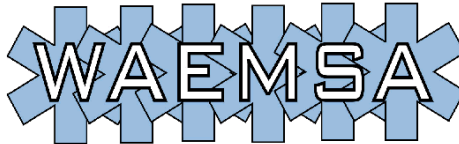
Representing Minnesota's EMS Professionals



Arkansas EMT Association



Professional Ambulance Association of Wisconsin



Wyoming Ambulance and Emergency Medical Services Association



Louisiana Ambulance Alliance



Mountain Rescue Association

