



Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Interim Committee

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60th Montana Legislature

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September 9, 2008

Keith Kelly, Commissioner
Department of Labor and Industry
P.O. Box 1728
Helena, MT 59624-1728

Dear Commissioner Kelly:

The June 2008 legislative performance audit of emergency medical services (EMS) in Montana recommended that the Department of Labor and Industry, through the Board of Medical Examiners, undertake several steps to work with the Department of Public Health and Human Services toward a coordinated state-level approach to emergency medical services in Montana.

The Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Interim Committee reviewed the audit recommendations as part of its interim Senate Joint Resolution 5 study of emergency medical services. The committee strongly believes that the departments must follow up on the recommendations to ensure that both Montanans and visitors to our state are assured that their emergency calls will be answered by a workforce that is well trained and properly equipped.

Thus the interim committee agreed on Aug. 22 to introduce legislation as proposed in Audit Recommendations #4 and #5, to clarify medical direction statutes and to clarify the handling of complaints involving emergency medical technicians and EMS agencies. These two recommendations were addressed to both state agencies.

The committee also is encouraging both agencies to work together, as suggested in Audit Recommendation #8, to ensure that EMS data is shared between the agencies to improve analysis and reporting of EMS system issues.

During this interim, committee members have become well acquainted with the importance of ensuring that Montana's EMS system is not only viable, but also that proper oversight exists to ensure that EMS providers and individual EMTs are ready to provide a quick and appropriate response when called. Thus we hope the Department of Labor and Industry will support the proposed committee legislation, currently LC 338, and work with DPHHS on Audit Recommendation #8.

Sincerely,

Edith Clark
Presiding Officer

c: Mike Cooney

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