

ex # 9

SENATE PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE & SAFETY	
EXHIBIT NO.	142
DATE:	2-18-05
BILL NO.	SB 448

February 18, 2005

Chairman Crowley and members of the Committee

My name is Deanna L. Babb. I am an advanced practice registered nurse and faculty of Montana State University College of Nursing. I have over 20 years of experience as a critical care nurse and 5 years experience as a volunteer Emergency Medical Technician in the Sun River Valley. I have the greatest respect for EMTs and the emergency services they provide and believe Montana needs a strong emergency medical system especially with the remoteness of many of our elder rural residents.

To become an EMT, I had to complete the 100 hours of training just like anyone else in the community, even with many years experience as an Intensive Care nurse and Advanced Cardiac Life Support certification. There is no reciprocity for health professionals with hospital experience.

So here is a question to ponder: If hospital emergency department experience does NOT qualify someone for EMT certification, how can emergency or "pre-hospital" experience qualify someone to work in a hospital emergency department? Emergency care is NOT medical care.

King County Medic One's statement to EMTs in Seattle regarding appropriate work setting and certification reads:

"Employment in a doctor's office or hospital emergency department is not considered "pre-hospital care", and therefore will not qualify you for EMT certification...."

As an EMT I was trained to quickly "size up a scene" and "pack and go" or TRANSPORT the patient to the nearest facility for care. I was taught to follow protocols, provide basic and advanced life support, and learned a prescribed set of skills designed for EMERGENCY care. So ask yourself: how many IV's need to be started, patients intubated, or CPR initiated in an 8 or 12 hour shift in the emergency room in Fort Benton, Big Timber or Shelby?

Most of the EMTs in rural Montana are volunteers with another full-time job. Will rural hospitals keep them "busy" in the emergency room waiting for the next patient who needs splinting or an Epi-Pen instead of ready to respond when an emergency occurs?

The men and women who chose to complete EMTs training do so to provide EMERGENCY care to their neighbors and citizens of Montana. Leave the hospital emergency room care to the professionals who are educated to provide the best MEDICAL care. Vote AGAINST N448.

Respectfully,  
Deanna L. Babb, MN, APRN