

Dear members of the Health and Human Services committee,

As the only representative of the Rhode Island Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians (RIACEP) on the Ambulance Service Coordinating Advisory Board (ASCAB) I write in opposition of H6282. I apologize for not being there personally to testify however I am working clinically.

Make no mistake about it, this legislation removes the authority and oversight of the Department of Health over Emergency Medical Services. Passage of this legislation will allow members of the board, comprised largely of non-physicians, to enact changes that will impact every aspect of prehospital care from protocol implementation to disciplinary action without DOH oversight. The fact that this legislation was expedited through so quickly and without collaboration from many stakeholders on the board including the EMS physicians and medical directors speaks for itself. For the Mayor who initiated this legislation to defame someone's character through slanderous comments during senate hearing S860 in order to advance their own agenda speaks volumes toward the appropriateness of this bill.

As a former paramedic and current EMS Medical Director I have served on the board for nearly ten years. I have dedicated my career to the patients I treat in the Emergency Department as well as the EMS providers with whom I work with, educate and advocate for on a daily basis. I can say with no reservation that removing the DOH's oversight will create a public health crisis.

In my time on the board I have witnessed the serial deconstruction of DOH oversight beginning with the removal of DOH representation from the ASCAB (replaced by a mayor) all the way to this legislation. Additionally I have watched many stakeholders at these ASCAB meetings continually disavow best practice and evidence based medicine. This is documented in the board minutes as well as certain media outlets.

While the board may seemingly be comprised of a broad spectrum of stakeholders I assure you this is an illusion. During our march meeting of the full ASCAB 20 members were present, twelve of which were either current or former union members. When major changes are to be voted on at full board meetings the leaders of certain interest groups present themselves in droves and essentially bully and intimidate the board to not enact best practices for their own self interest, often times after these practices had been approved through committee. These above referenced incidents have been well documented both in the media as well as the minutes of the board.

There is a tremendous amount of opposition to this bill from all medical disciplines. I'm sure more EMS providers would testify against this bill if they weren't union members. As an EMS and Emergency physician, father, Rhode Islander and eventual patient I implore you to vote NO on H6282.

Thank you for your time,

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-RIACEP Representative: ASCAB
-EMS Medical Director