

April 16, 2026

The Honorable Melissa A. Murray, Chair  
Senate Health and Human Services Committee  
Rhode Island State Senate  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

RE: SENATE BILL 2685 – AN ACT RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- EMERGENCY MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Dear Chair Murray and Honorable Committee Members,

On behalf of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, we write to express our support for Senate Bill 2685, which would provide coverage and increase individual and group insurance reimbursement rates for ambulance services, require health insurers to provide coverage for emergency medical service providers administering Mobile Integrated Health–Community Paramedicine (MIH-CP), and direct the Department of Health, in collaboration with the Ambulance Service Coordinating Advisory Board, to administer a statewide MIH-CP program.

Municipalities rely heavily on local emergency medical service providers to respond to medical emergencies and to ensure that residents receive timely and appropriate care. Across the state, EMS agencies are already providing treatment in place when it is clinically appropriate; however, under the current reimbursement model, EMS agencies are only reimbursed when a patient is transported to a hospital. This structure does not fully reflect the evolving role of EMS providers or the reality that many patients can be effectively treated on-site or connected with appropriate follow-up care without requiring transport to an emergency department.

Many Rhode Island communities have already begun implementing Mobile Integrated Health–Community Paramedicine programs, including municipalities such as West Warwick, Cumberland, Smithfield, and Providence. These programs help connect residents with the appropriate level of care, reduce unnecessary emergency department utilization, and support vulnerable populations who benefit from medical services delivered in their homes. In many cases, these programs have been made possible through temporary grant funding or limited pilot initiatives. Without a sustainable reimbursement pathway, however, municipalities face significant challenges in maintaining and expanding these important services.

Senate Bill 2685 would help address this gap by requiring health insurers to provide coverage for emergency medical service providers delivering Mobile Integrated Health–Community Paramedicine services and by increasing reimbursement rates for ambulance services. In addition, the legislation directs the Department of Health, in collaboration with the Ambulance Service Coordinating Advisory Board, to administer a statewide program to support and coordinate MIH-CP efforts. Together, these provisions would establish a more sustainable and coordinated framework for delivering innovative EMS services across Rhode Island.

From the municipal perspective, strengthening EMS reimbursement and supporting community paramedicine programs can help ensure that local departments have the resources necessary to meet increasing service demands while continuing to provide high-quality care to residents. These programs not only improve patient outcomes but also help alleviate pressure on hospital emergency departments and better utilize the expertise of EMS professionals.

The Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns appreciates the intent of this legislation and believes it represents an important step toward modernizing EMS delivery and reimbursement in Rhode Island. We respectfully urge favorable consideration of Senate Bill 2685 and stand ready to work with the sponsor and the General Assembly to support policies that strengthen emergency medical services for communities across our state.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please do not hesitate to reach out should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Rossi', written in a cursive style.

Randy R. Rossi  
Executive Director

Cc: Honorable Members of Senate Health and Human Services Committee