

## COPY AND PASTE THIS LETTER ONTO YOUR AGENCY'S LETTERHEAD

March 7, 2013

Representative \_\_\_\_\_  
PO Box 2910  
Austin, TX 78768

Representative \_\_\_\_\_,

I am writing to express my support for funding and passing Riders 53, 55, 85 and 86 as listed in the House Committee on Appropriations document dated March 3, 2013. I also support the passage of Rider 54 as long as the dollars saved are required to be used to further fund Riders 53, 55, 85 and 86.

Over the last three years, the ambulance industry has been subjected to two across the board reductions in Medicaid reimbursement. Then, in the 82<sup>nd</sup> Regular Legislative Session, the ambulance industry suffered a catastrophic loss of revenue when Medicare Equalization stopped the payment of Medicaid crossover payments on dual eligible patients. This resulted in Medicaid reductions of 30% to 50% for ambulance providers all over the State of Texas. These reductions have led to ambulance agencies of all types taking financial losses, having to reduce the level of service they provide and even closing their doors completely.

*Our agency... This is where you tell your agency's story...talk about your financial reductions, how you don't get to choose what patients you serve, how this has become an unfunded mandate on your local area, how you have had to shift costs to other payers, the dollars lost...whatever. It needs to be short and sweet, yet as impactful as possible.*

I am asking you for some relief for my agency and agencies across the State. I am asking that Rider 85 or 86 be funded to repay our crossover payments from this biennium and to insure that they are funded for the upcoming one as well. This will address the Attorney General Opinion (GA-0983) that stated HHSC's stoppage of these payments was in conflict with current state law. In addition, I am asking that Rider 53 be funded to take our Medicaid reimbursement rates for ambulance (currently 21% lower than Medicare) to the Medicare fee schedule rates (which are still 6-10% below the cost of providing ambulance service). I also support Rider 55 as it requires HHSC to find more local dollars to improve our reimbursement and I will also support Rider 54, as long as the cost savings from this movement of dialysis transports to the Medical Transportation Program is used to help fulfill Rider 53, 85 and/or 86.

Thank you for your time and attention in this matter. I look forward to your support and passage of these Riders. These are critical to maintain appropriate access to ambulance care, not only in my agency's area, but across the State of Texas.

Sincerely,