Dear Senator XXXX:

Please advocate for the inclusion of more funding for ground ambulance service organizations in the next legislative package on COVID-19 relief. Our operation continues to struggle with the financial impact of responding to the national health emergency, and we desperately need your continued help.

Everyday our paramedics and emergency medical technicians (EMTs) are treating, transporting and testing potential COVID-19 patients. While our costs have increased exponentially in response to COVID-19, our revenue has decreased as we maintain full readiness to combat the pandemic and continue to provide 24-hour vital non COVID-19-related ambulance services, but with fewer transports.

Our costs for personal protection equipment (PPE), overtime pay, and other expenses directly related to COVID-19 are increasing. We need to respond to every call prepared as if the patient has COVID-19. However, in many instances the medical care is only covered if the patient is transported to an appropriate facility.

At the same time, there is a sharp decline in the normal response and transport volume as Americans are reluctant to call 9-1-1 for non-COVID-19 medical emergencies and as hospitals cancel all non-elective surgeries and related medically necessary transports. Simply put, our costs are increasing as we expend the resources necessary to address COVID-19 as our revenue across the board is decreasing.

While we appreciate the funding we have received thus far under the general allocation of the Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund (PHSSEF), the money covered just 3 weeks of our operating expenses. The only other program under the PHSSEF that ambulance services are eligible is for the treatment of uninsured COVID-19 patients which are a small portion of the patients we treat. The American Ambulance Association estimates that ground ambulance service organizations combined have received just $300 million of the $50 billion of the general allocation yet we are frontline medical providers during the public health emergency.

In communities across America, patients rely on us around the clock for an immediate response to every call for help regardless of ability to pay. Our organization needs immediate financial relief to maintain current staffing and resources to address the COVID-19 outbreak and ensure we can continue to provide vital emergency and non-emergency ambulance services today and in the future.

**We need your assistance to address the under allocation of critically needed resources to ground EMS in the PHSSEF. Losses due to COVID-19 on a per ambulance basis are approximately $48,000 or $2.89 billion as an industry, reflecting increased costs, lower utilization and uncompensated care as well as lack of coverage for treatment in place to avoid taking patients to emergency departments. However, ground ambulance service organizations have received only one-tenth of that amount so far under the PHSSEF. As the Senate continues to develop the next economic stimulus package, please provide sufficient direction to HHS to assure the critical needs of EMS are addressed. EMS is the first to respond but seems to be the last in line for PHSSEF funding. If we are to keep our critical 24-hour 9-1-1 emergency medical service infrastructure in place, we need more assistance to cover the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Thank you in advance for helping ensure that EMS agencies and personnel have the resources they need to continue to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and the funding to maintain the short and long-term viability of our operations.

Sincerely,

XXXX XXXX