

August 11, 2020

President Donald J. Trump  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Trump:

Thank you for acknowledging during your recent press conference the incredible job that the ambulance service provider community is doing in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Understanding the risks that our paramedics and emergency medical technicians (EMTs) take every day to treat, transport, and test potential COVID-19 patients is extremely meaningful to our membership. We thank you for your kind words.

The American Ambulance Association (AAA) represents the providers of vital emergency and non-emergency ground ambulance services and the paramedics and EMTs who deliver the direct medical care and transport for thousands of communities across the United States. However, they desperately need financial assistance and support, as they remain the frontline responders to our nation's coronavirus 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 protective 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. Additionally, many patients who call 911 are being treated in place and not transported per local protocols, resulting in care without reimbursement. Simply put, our costs are increasing as we expend the resources necessary to address COVID-19 as our revenue across the board is decreasing.

As you and your Administration consider additional distributions under the HHS provider relief program, we need assurances that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) will provide much more robust support to the ambulance service community. While we appreciate the distributions to date, they represent only about 10% of the total additional cost and lost revenues we have experienced and only \$300 to \$500 million of the over \$120 billion allocated thus far to health care providers.

We also would like CMS to reimburse ground ambulance service providers for performing protocol-driven treatments in place during the public health emergency. This coverage will help limit the spread of COVID-19 by keeping patients with mild cases of COVID-19 at home and out of overcrowded hospitals or other facilities where they could expose others to the virus.

AAA members greatly appreciate your public recognition of the danger their jobs place them in on a daily basis. Therefore, we thank you in advance for your consideration and helping ensure that ambulance 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,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Aaron Reinert', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Aarron Reinert  
President

#### About the American Ambulance Association

The AAA is the primary association for ground ambulance service suppliers/providers, including governmental entities, volunteer services, private for-profit, private not-for-profit, and hospital-based ambulance services. Our members provide emergency and non-emergency medical transportation services to more than 75 percent of the U.S. population. AAA members serve patients in all 50 states and provide services in urban, rural, and super-rural areas. As the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration identified in its 2013 report on emergency services, EMS-only systems – such as our members – provide the vast majority of emergency ambulance services throughout America.