



December 8th, 2023

Dear Members of the Joint Emergency Medical Services Task Force ~

There are over 140 Public Service Areas across the state that are operated by a Local Government Unit. Of those, more than 90 are operated by **small cities** (population under 5,000). Our cities have been sounding the alarm about the lack of adequate resources for EMS services and the issue is only getting worse.

- Small cities are losing between \$10-16 million in operations costs vs reimbursements annually.
- The EMSRB estimates over \$50 million in EMS volunteer benefits annually. This is overwhelmingly provided by small city residents all across Minnesota.
- None of these deficits include the growing capital needs facing these communities.

The combined impact of these factors is putting the critical care needs of the public service in danger, as more and more small communities are facing very real and difficult decisions about being able to provide these much needed services for their communities.

MN Small Cities strongly opposes any policy change that would allow cities to opt in or out of districts in greater MN. With the current system it would create dangerous scenarios of unneeded competition between communities and very likely result in unsustainable cost increases and leaving some communities without reliable service.

We do understand that there are a wide range of issues facing EMS service providers across the state and that there is likely no magic policy change that will “fix” everything. This is especially true given the range of different operators and the acknowledgment that finding a ‘one size fits all’ solution is probably unrealistic. MN Small Cities has been supportive of, is participating in, and will continue in ongoing stakeholder discussions to find viable comprehensive solutions.

The financial needs of public emergency services providers are critical and in need of urgent investment this legislative session. MN Small Cities is calling for new funding to address the short term issues while we continue ongoing discussions for long term solutions.

Cap O'Rourke
MN Small Cities