

FY 2012-2013 Budget Testimony Before the Senate Finance Committee



...ensuring safe medical transportation

Presented by
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FY 2012-2013 OPERATIONAL BUDGET HEARING

State Senator Chris Widener - Chair

Chairman Widener and members of the Senate Finance Committee; my name is Connie White. I am the Administrative Assistant of the Ohio Medical Transportation Board (OMTB). I am pleased to be here today to present testimony on the Board's fiscal year 2012 and 2013 Executive Budget recommendations and to answer any questions the committee may have about the continuing operations of the Ohio Medical Transportation Board.

Introduction and Overview

Pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 4766, the Board was established to ensure safe medical transportation for those in need. The Board is responsible for all identified emergency medical service organizations (commercial and hospital-based), non-emergency medical service organizations (ambulette/wheelchair van operation), mobile intensive care organizations, and air medical service organizations (medical helicopters/fixed wing medical aircraft) operating within the boundaries of Ohio.

The Board's goal and priority is to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of all patients by ensuring safe, reliable, and effective medical transportation (emergency, non-emergency, and air medical) for all individuals.

All regulated organizations are required to annually renew their licenses; this includes a physical inspection of headquarter/satellite facilities and each medical transportation vehicle. During each inspection, our field inspectors conduct a thorough review of the organization's personnel records, dispatch records, preventive maintenance program, operational procedures, cleanliness, compliance to federal blood borne pathogens protocols, reserve medical inventory and evidence of appropriate insurance levels. Each medical transportation vehicle is required to undergo a thirty-five point roadworthiness inspection. Ambulances and specialized units such as mobile intensive care units and medical aircraft undergo a higher level of inspection that includes verification of proper functioning adjunct medical equipment, compliance with bio-medical inspections, and on-board medical supplies. The Board currently licenses in excess of three hundred and seventy-five non-emergency medical service organizations; emergency medical service organizations at the basic, intermediate, and advanced life support levels; mobile intensive care organizations; and air medical providers with fixed and rotor wing capabilities. This past year, our inspectors visited over 750 service

locations throughout Ohio's 88 counties as well as locations in bordering states of Indiana, Kentucky, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Michigan. Our field inspectors completed detailed physical inspection of over 3100 licensed medical transportation vehicles. In addition to scheduled onsite inspections, the board continuously conducts unannounced inspections to ensure licensees remain compliant with the law and rules as contained in Ohio Revised Code 4766. In calendar year 2010, the licensees provided medical transportation to over 2.2 million citizens.

As stated, the Board is supportive of the Executive Budget recommendation for the upcoming biennium. However, it is imperative that our citizens, state, and local leaders are fully aware that the proposed reduction in funding levels will impact our ability to fulfill our regulatory mandates. Our staff remains committed to fulfilling our responsibility to the public; achieving safe medical transportation through continuous onsite field inspections of both physical facilities and medical transportation vehicles. These inspections will continue to be done in such a way as not to be disruptive to the flow of service being provided to the public by the licensed operators.

I will briefly describe the accomplishments of the board during the last Biennium

- The Board continues its practice of utilizing contract “on-demand” field inspectors to conduct the annual physical inspection of licensee headquarters locations, satellites locations, and medical transportation vehicles. The utilization of off-duty public firefighter/paramedics, EMS instructors, retired EMS personnel continues to offer forth substantial savings to the licensees, public, and the Board. Aside from the economic savings, the field inspectors by design live and work within the very same region in which they inspect. This approach allows for the field inspectors the ability to continuously monitor the activity of licensees.
- The Board is very pleased to share with the committee that strategic planning remains an integral part of the Board's activities; by design this plan is reviewed each meeting. Our approach provides accountabilities, fosters team work, reminds us of our successes, readily identifies operational barriers and breeds operational efficiencies. The Board truly has endured the challenging economic times through strategic planning; fostering a proactive business environment while minimizing the opportunity for crisis management.

- During the last biennium, the Board recorded zero hours in overtime; an achievement that required individual sacrifice, hard work and commitment to the Board's mission. In addition to achieving no overtime, each staff member participated in "cost savings days" reducing the average work week to 38.50 hours. As with all state employees, our success was the result of true professionals who are and continue to provide essential services to the citizens. The nontraditional approach to managing today's government is quickly becoming the norm; OMTB staff is postured, skilled and prepared for the continuous cycle of change. Our team has and will continue doing its part in making Ohio's future a little brighter.

Executive Budget Recommendations

The Board understands that continued fiscal reductions are necessary in order to achieve a balanced budget. The identified budget amount will be sufficient to maintain the **core levels of service** being provided to the licensed medical transportation organizations and potential applicants throughout Ohio and contiguous states. This level of funding will allow the Board to continue to meet its legislative mandates including projected staff payroll, maintenance expenses, complaint investigations, administrative rules adoption, publications and ongoing continuing education.

Revenues

All authorized medical transportation organizations renew their licenses annually thus resulting in a reliable and predictable revenue stream. This revenue, in conjunction with the two percent of seat belt fine revenue, ensures sufficient income to continue providing the current **core level** of service to all the licensed medical transportation organizations.

Conclusion

In summary, the proposed Executive Budget recommendations of \$493,641 for 2012 and \$493,856 for 2013 will permit the continuance of the Board's current operations at the mandated core levels of service. The Board and its staff will continue to work hard and smart; maximizing our efficiencies is the new norm. The board expresses its appreciation to the Office of Budget and Management, the Legislative Budget Office, and the Legislative Service Commission for all their assistance in the preparation of this budget proposal. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before the committee. We are prepared to answer any questions the committee may have regarding the proposed budget.