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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2           WHEREAS, The Illinois Emergency Medical Services (EMS)  
3 System, comprised of dozens of individual EMS systems operating  
4 throughout the State, has since the early 1970s represented  
5 one-third of our crucial 911 emergency response  
6 infrastructure; and

7           WHEREAS, Illinois' EMS system and the thousands of people  
8 it employs continue to play a vital and life-saving role for  
9 the people of Illinois; and

10           WHEREAS, Approximately two-thirds of non-police 911 calls  
11 are calls requesting an ambulance; and

12           WHEREAS, In addition to responding to 911 calls placed from  
13 homes and businesses, Illinois' EMS system covers all 16,000  
14 miles of Illinois' roads; and

15           WHEREAS, EMS ambulances annually respond to tens of  
16 thousands of motor vehicle crashes, treating 88,937 injured  
17 motorists in 2010, the latest year of available data; and

18           WHEREAS, Timely, efficient, and appropriate emergency  
19 medical care is one of the most significant factors in  
20 determining a patients outcome for a great many medical issues

1 in addition to trauma, notably including acute cardiovascular  
2 disease, the nation's number one killer of adults; and

3 WHEREAS, Properly maintained ambulances outfitted with  
4 advanced medical equipment are necessary to provide optimal  
5 emergency medical care on scene and enroute to the hospital;  
6 and

7 WHEREAS, Advanced levels of training are necessary for all  
8 practitioners of emergency medicine, with higher licensure  
9 levels representing greater lengths of training and a greater  
10 range of advanced medical procedures; and

11 WHEREAS, Despite longer average drive times from the scene  
12 of a medical emergency to a hospital, and thus longer periods  
13 of time in which patients are in the sole care of emergency  
14 medical practitioners, many rural EMS systems are staffed  
15 primarily by volunteer Emergency Medical Technicians often  
16 with comparably lower levels of training and less available  
17 medical equipment than is found in most urban EMS systems; and

18 WHEREAS, While many well-funded federal grants were  
19 deservedly made available to police and fire services over the  
20 last 11 years, the same cannot be said of federal funds  
21 available to EMS services, forcing many joint fire/EMS  
22 departments and stand-alone EMS departments to rely on ad-hoc

1 local fundraising efforts to keep up aging ambulances and basic  
2 equipment; and

3 WHEREAS, The State has often found it necessary to sweep  
4 expected EMS funds due to ongoing budget challenges, resulting  
5 in the fact that actual EMS funding has largely remained flat  
6 or declined over the last 10 years; and

7 WHEREAS, Attrition of more highly-trained EMTs, especially  
8 within volunteer EMS departments, has led to a situation in  
9 which recruitment, up-training, and retention of qualified  
10 EMTs has become incredibly challenging for many EMS  
11 departments; and

12 WHEREAS, These various challenges are indicative of the  
13 fact that despite over 40 years of crucial service, and in  
14 contrast to the equally worthy Police and Fire Services,  
15 Emergency Medical Service has never been declared an essential  
16 service by the State of Illinois; and

17 WHEREAS, Despite these many challenges they face as an  
18 equal third of the State's emergency response infrastructure,  
19 the brave and talented men and women of Illinois' EMS system  
20 continue to save lives and improve medical outcomes for  
21 patients across the State on a daily basis; therefore, be it

1           RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
2           NINETY-SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that  
3           Emergency Medical Service should be prioritized in line with  
4           its value to the people of Illinois and should formally be  
5           declared an Essential Service.