

NEW YORK  
STATE  
LEGISLATURE



March 11, 2019

Honorable Andrea Stewart-Cousins  
Temporary President and Majority Leader  
Room 330  
NYS Capitol  
Albany, New York 12247

Honorable Carl E. Heastie  
Speaker of the Assembly  
Room 932  
Legislative Office Building  
Albany, New York 12248

Honorable John Flanagan  
Minority Leader  
Room 315  
NYS Capitol  
Albany, New York 12247

Honorable Brian Kolb  
Minority Leader  
Room 933  
Legislative Office Building  
Albany, New York 12248

Dear Legislative Leaders:

As representatives of Central and Northern New York, we are concerned with the Governor's proposed cuts to ambulance service providers and the negative impact these cuts will have on access to emergency medical care. For these reasons, we are writing to urge the Assembly and Senate to reject the Governor's proposals.

As you know, the executive budget eliminates crossover coverage payments and supplemental Medicaid payments to ambulance services. The aggregate loss in funding under these cuts is \$23 million. In addition, the Governor in his 30-day amendments, proposes a \$190 million across the board cut to Medicaid. This cut will further reduce the Medicaid reimbursement rate to ambulance service providers. Many providers have contacted us and shared their concerns about the impact these reductions will have on their organizations and the communities they serve.

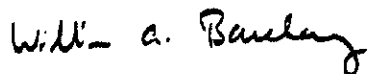
Low reimbursement rates have been an ongoing issue for ambulance service providers statewide. Following a report done by the Department of Health in 2017, the state determined that the Medicaid reimbursement rate for ambulance providers was too low. As a result, the Department recommended phasing in a \$31.4 million rate increase. The increased rates have just gone into effect. While the Governor included a \$6 million increase for Medicaid reimbursement rate for ambulance providers, his \$20.4 million elimination of the crossover coverage rate combined with the across the board Medicaid cuts negates any rate increase.

We are concerned that if these reductions are enacted there will be dire consequences for communities across the state, including the areas we represent. Many small communities rely on volunteer ambulance companies for emergency services. Without state assistance through

Medicaid reimbursement and other supplemental funding, it will be nearly impossible for small and rural communities to afford this critical service. If the proposed cuts are enacted, many ambulance service providers will be forced to turn to local towns and villages to make up the difference – another costly shift or unfunded mandate onto our local governments.

For these reasons, we strongly urge the rejection of the Governor's proposals and to restore critical funding to ambulance service providers.

Very truly yours,



Assemblyman Will Barclay



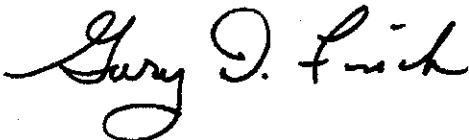
Senator Robert Antonacci



Assemblyman Ken Blankenbush



Senator Patty Ritchie



Assemblyman Gary Finch



Assemblyman Brian Manktelow



Assemblyman Mark Walczyk