



September 4, 2014

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr.
Governor of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 556 (Padilla) - Request for Veto

Dear Governor Brown:

NAGE/SEIU Local 5000 represents more than 4,500 professional EMTs and Paramedics in the State of California. NAGE/SEIU Local 5000 requests your veto of SB 556 (Padilla). This labeling scheme could endanger public health and safety and is nothing more than a solution in search of a problem.

Senate Bill 556 would require private ambulance companies that contract with government entities to label their employees' uniforms and vehicles to clearly designate that they are contractors performing public services. SB 556 could have dangerous impacts within the Emergency Medical Services systems throughout California.

Specifically, the bill would create a mixture of labeled and non-labeled EMS providers working in the same geographical areas. In "open" 911 systems, such as in Sacramento, private ambulance companies and their employees would not be required to be labeled as contractors however could respond into areas where such labels are required.

The converse is also true, where labeled EMS providers could respond to emergencies in areas where labels are not required. The resulting confusion over who has legitimate authority to respond to 911 emergencies could endanger public health and safety.

Further showing the superfluous nature of this legislation is the fact that private ambulance and public firefighter EMTs and paramedics are currently certified by the State of California under identical standards. Just as physicians and attorneys working for either private law firms or public agencies must pass the same state exam and continued education requirements, both public and private EMTs and Paramedics must do the same. Throughout the state, local jurisdictional authority is applied to determine which EMT or Paramedic, Public or Private, has the authority to respond in an official capacity to any emergency incident. A labeling requirement as found in SB556 could



unnecessarily complicate that local jurisdictional authority, creating questions over which privately employed emergency responders have the legal authority to provide emergency medical services to communities.

SB 556 neither improves public health or safety, nor advance any emergency medical system in the State of California. The targeting of “private” companies who contract for government services would affect many of our California members.

NAGE/SEIU Local 5000 is opposed to these unnecessary changes to California law and asks that you veto SB 556. Instead, of creating confusion and discord, let us all work together to improve 911 systems and public health in the State of California.

Please feel free to contact us if we can be of any service to you in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Philip Petit', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Philip Petit, National Director
International Association of EMTs and Paramedics* / NAGE EMS*
(*Both divisions of NAGE/SEIU Local 5000)