



Chair Taylor, Vice Chair Bonham and Members of the Senate Committee on Labor and Business,

The Oregon State Ambulance Association (OSAA) is the statewide membership organization of emergency medical services (EMS) providers. OSAA members include public, private, nonprofit, ground and air EMS agencies.

OSAA supports SB 857, which will add Oregon to the EMS Compact. The EMS Compact facilitates the day-to-day movement of EMS personnel across state boundaries in the performance of their duties. EMS personnel, including EMTs and Paramedics, licensed in a compact member state are granted a *Privilege to Practice* in the other compact member states. There are currently 22 states that have joined the compact, including Idaho.

EMS providers in Oregon are experiencing a significant workforce shortage. Pre-hospital EMS service providers are at a breaking point because there are not enough paramedics (ALS providers) to meet the increasing demands for EMS services and inter-facility medical transports. As a result, EMS providers are experiencing decreasing availability to respond to 911 calls and increasing response time. SB 857 is one tool that will help to address this shortage by allowing EMS personnel from other states to more easily come into Oregon to provide care.

Joining the EMS compact would provide many benefits to Oregon, including the below:

- Oregon would maintain exclusive authority over license issued by Oregon, including disciplinary actions
- Oregon would gain authority over EMS personnel from other state, when practicing in Oregon
- Oregon would join other compact states in governmental commission that creates universal rules
- Oregon would gain access to National EMS Coordinated database (which shows disciplinary action)
- Oregon would gain the authority and legal framework to investigate complaints against EMS personnel from other states when practicing in Oregon

Oregon’s private and public EMS agencies are experiencing a 50 – 75% decrease in paramedic applicants since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic according to a September 2021 survey by OSAA and the Oregon Fire Chiefs. In addition, both initial and renewal EMS licensure trends were relatively flat between 2019 and 2022, yet the demand for paramedics – and other EMS providers – is increasing with volume escalations. This is a cause for great concern given the projected demand for these professionals over the next 10 years, and we must add tools to the toolchest today so that we can be fully prepared to respond to emergencies today and into the future.

The Oregon State Ambulance Association respectfully requests support of SB 857.

Thank you for your consideration,  
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Oregon State Ambulance Association  
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