November 30, 2018

**Birgitta Corsello, Solano County Administrator**

*Chair, SEMSC*

**Josh Chadwick, Fire Chief**

*Benicia Fire Department*

**Caesar Djavaherian, MD**

*Northbay Medical Center*

**Thea Giboney, MHA**

*Kaiser Permanente*

**Lillian Pan, MD, MS**

*Sutter Solano Medical Center*

**David White, City Manager**

*City of Fairfield*

**CONCERNS REGARDING EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES SYSTEM REVIEW AND DRAFT REPORT**

Dear Chair Corsello and Board Members,

I am writing you to express my serious concerns about the Emergency Medical Services Report and RFP draft which has been developed by Page, Wolfberg & Wirth.

My Supervisorial District in Solano County includes three Fire Departments - Vallejo, Benicia and Fairfield - all of which will be deeply affected by this proposal. The following are my specific areas of concern:

Privatization of Emergency Medical Dispatch (Recommendation #2)

I am strongly against the idea of privatizing the services that our local cities provide currently. I know that the level of emergency service provided by our emergency medical professionals is excellent. Removing dispatch from local control would result in a decrease in overall service delivery and impact safety. Emergency Medical Dispatch should be required of the individual Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) to ensure the proper priority level is applied to each EMS call. It is within the local jurisdictions’ responsibility to provide service to our residents and taking away this power is irresponsible given the negative impacts it would have.

Tiered EMS Response (Recommendation #1)

The consultant recommends having a tiered EMS response and says it is a “recognized standard of care” without providing any data or statistics to back up this claim. Essentially, the consultant is recommending that there be a dispatch triage system to spare the Advanced Life Support (ALS) units from responding and require only Basic Life Support services (BLS) in certain situations instead. I do not agree with having a triaged system and the line between ALS and BLS response should not be distinguished. Otherwise, we risk doing a disservice to the patients. There is no such thing as a BLS patient or an ALS patient — there are just patients. Further, the consultant is only trying to take away the services that our Fire Departments currently provide for our residents by privatizing what should be a public function. A private ambulance company should not dictate to our Fire Departments what level of response is needed.

Exclusion of Fire Departments from Bidding Process (Recommendation #13)

Another major concern I have is the experience requirement of “5 years and status as a current EOA provider serving a population of at least 300,000 persons.” This necessarily excludes the Fire Departments in my District from bidding as each city does not meet the population requirement. Again, this is just a way to steer public services and therefore, much needed public funds, to a private company.

Lack of Input from Fire Departments

As I reviewed the report, it is clear the stakeholder input from the Fire Chiefs was not taken into consideration at all. On page 49 of the report it states 13 different recommendations from Fire Chiefs. Among those recommendations are:

* Fire Departments do not want to be taken out of the call-taking and dispatch process for the people in the communities they serve
* Fire Departments do not want to be dispatched by a commercial service
* Any increase in money going into the system should be used to help the Public Private Partnership fire departments

It seems that nearly all of the Fire Chiefs’ recommendations were ignored in the report. I am in agreement with the Fire Chiefs and I strongly disagree with diverting public funds to a private ambulance service. The Fire Chiefs know the communities they serve best as their personnel provide care to our residents 100% of the time, no matter what the call entails.

In summary, I believe the JPA should not vote in favor of this RFP draft without making crucial changes such as removing the privatization of emergency medical dispatch, the tiered EMS response and the strict requirement for bidding.

I believe this contract is essential to the care our citizens of Solano County will receive and should not be approved as is currently drafted.

Please contact me if you have any questions as to my concerns and recommendations.

Sincerely,

Monica Brown,

Solano County Supervisor District 2

*Cc: Solano County Fire Chiefs Association*

*Solano County EMS Agency*

*Solano County Sheriff’s Office*

*Delta Fire Protection District Board of Directors*

*Daily Republic*

*Benicia Herald*

*Times Herald*

*Benicia City Council*

*Fairfield City Council*

*Vallejo City Council*

*Vallejo Firefighters Local 1186*

*Benicia Firefighters Local 1186*

*Fairfield Firefighters Local 1186*