



“UNITY IS STRENGTH”

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April 5, 2020

Governor Laura Kelly
300 SW 10th Ave, Suite 241S
Topeka, KS 66612-1590

Dear Governor Kelly

On behalf of the Kansas EMS Association, please accept our thanks and deep appreciation for your efforts to support Kansas EMS as it responds to the COVID-19 pandemic. We know that you and your administration are working tirelessly to fight the pandemic and keep our residents safe.

I want to bring to your attention two great concerns for Kansas EMS agencies and our providers. The first is the lack of available personal protective equipment (PPE) for our EMS providers. The second is the lack of workers compensation coverage for our EMS Providers if they are quarantined or become ill from COVID-19 due to exposures in the workplace.

EMS lacks medical supplies, particularly PPE. This includes face masks, gloves, goggles, gowns, ventilators, and other essential medical supplies and medications. This lack of necessary supplies is endangering our EMTs and Paramedics, their families and colleagues, and their patients. EMS personnel are having to utilize improvised or recycled PPE, which is proven to not be adequate protection. The Federal Government has passed crucial pandemic relief and stimulus bills in the last couple of weeks; we hope you will use some of this funding to directly support and sustain EMS in Kansas.

There is also a very big concern that EMS Providers will be severely financially impacted if they are quarantined or become ill from COVID-19 due to delivering care to patients. Kansas workers compensation does not cover communicable disease infections even though EMS and other healthcare providers are clearly putting themselves in harms' way to deliver much needed care. The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) was passed at the federal level but does not cover entities larger than 500 employees. KEMSA is requesting that you issue an executive order to cover lost wages and healthcare cost of frontline providers who become ill or are quarantined due to exposure of COVID-19 in the delivery of care to patients. KEMSA trusts your administration to develop the proper framework to enact provision to care for our responders.

I ask that you please take steps to protect our providers so that they can focus on the mission of responding to the needs of Kansans.

Respectfully

Dave Johnston, President KEMSA