Public Policy: No Choice but to Engage in the Process

August 8, 2022

“

Laws and regulations touch every aspect of an EMS operation. Whether we like it or not, EMS agencies must engage in the public policy process.

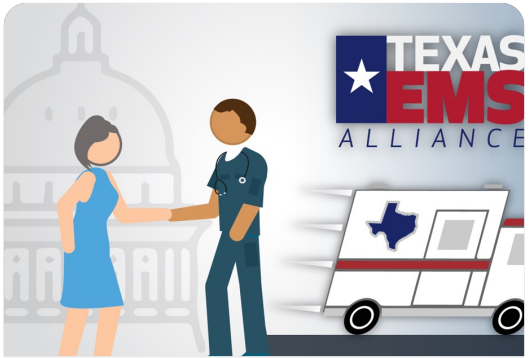
If we don’t engage, other segments of the health care industry will define EMS issues on their own terms, and we won’t like the results.

Three Steps

How to Be an Effective Advocate

Read TEMSA's Newsletter

Learn about the issues. Prepare to engage.



Host a Lawmaker

Invite your lawmakers to your agency; work with TEMSA.

Testify at the Capitol

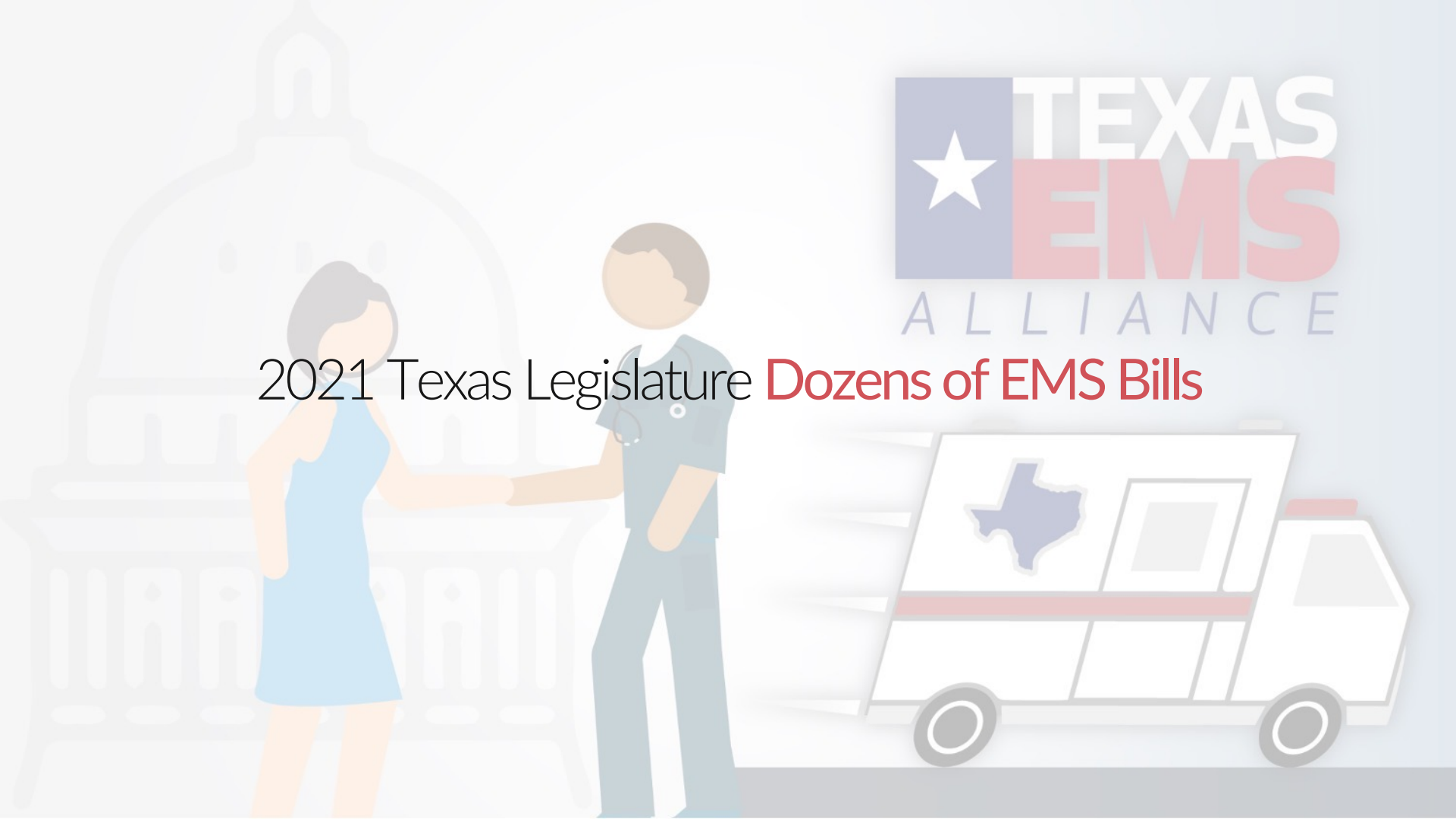
A dozen TEMSA members testified in 2021.

THANK A TEMSA MEMBER

TEMSA is recognized as one of the nation's most successful EMS organizations, and TEMSA proved that once again in the 2021 Texas Legislature. TEMSA's success on behalf of its patients and EMS agencies is only possible due to the support of TEMSA members.

Thank a TEMSA member for making this possible.

2021 Texas Legislature Dozens of EMS Bills



Dozens of Bills TEMSA's Bill Tracker & Legislative Summary

June 5, 2021

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- ET3 Legislation
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TEXAS EMS ALLIANCE

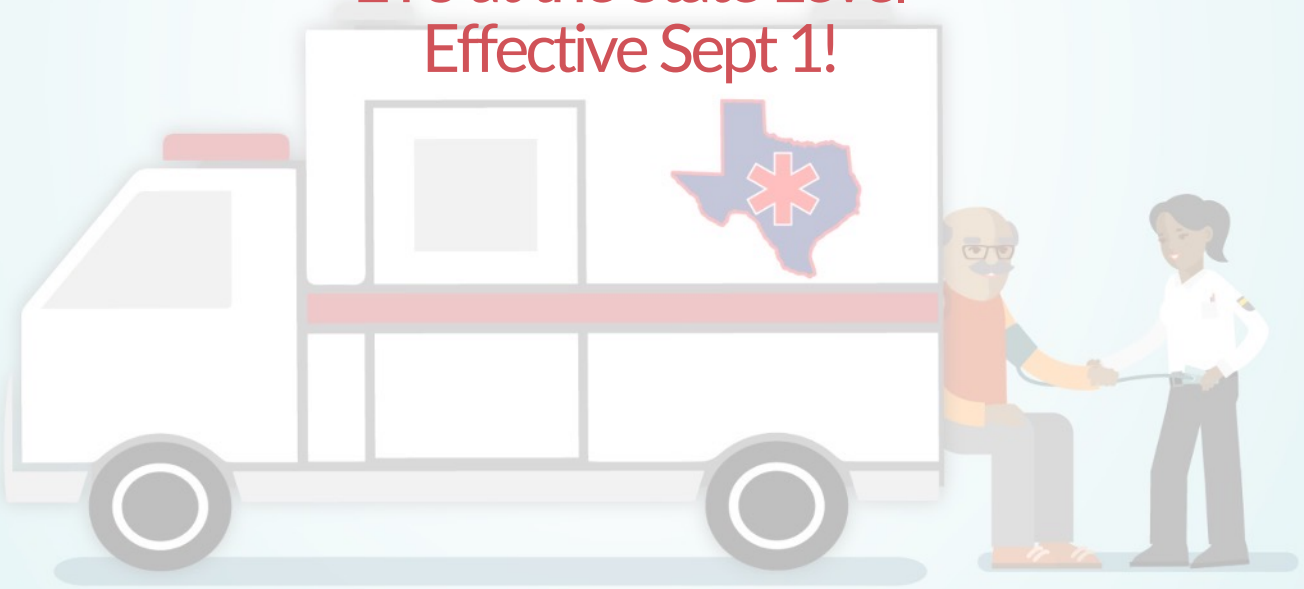
EMS INNOVATION

Treatment in Place & Alternate Destination Transport

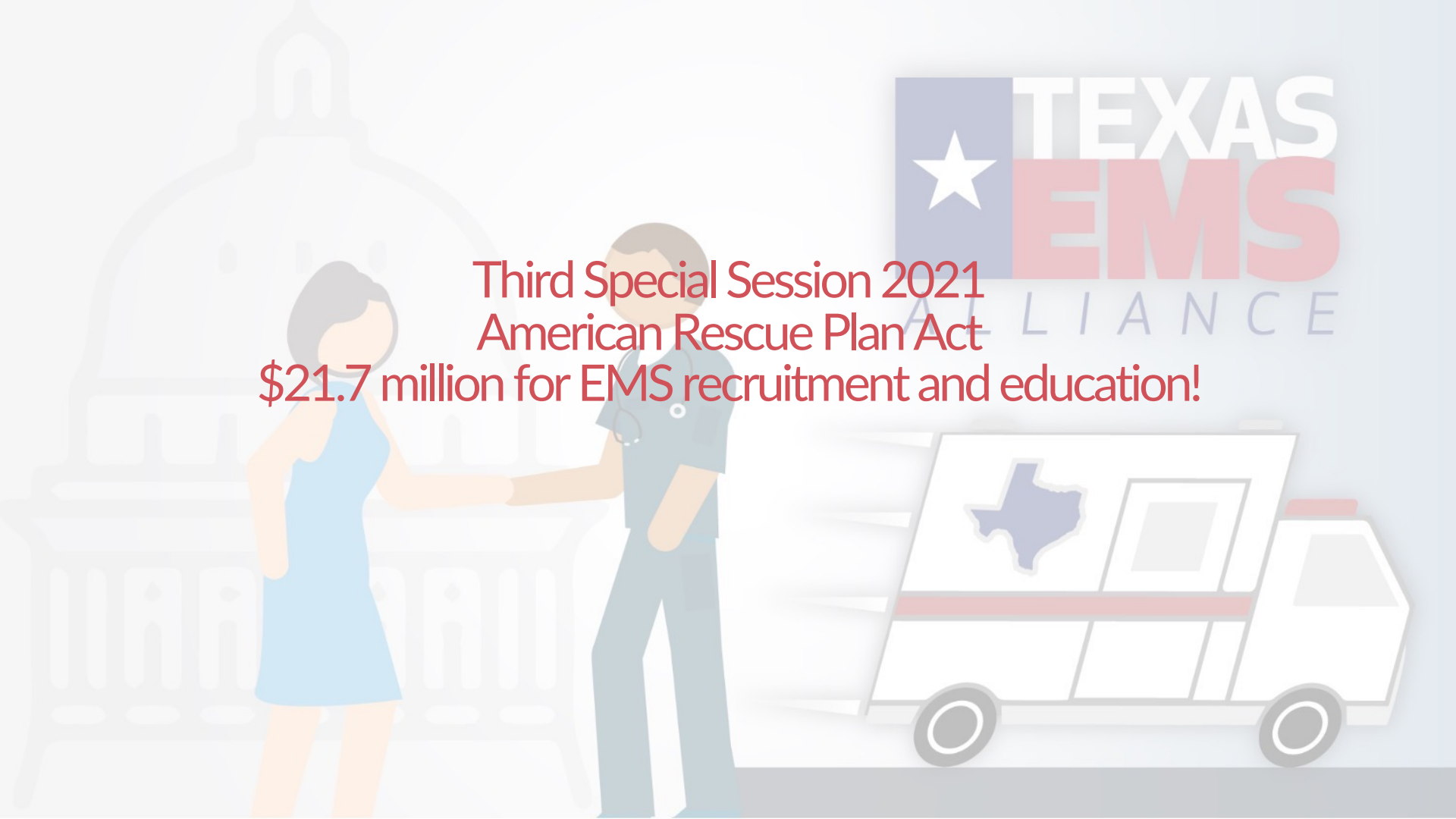
2021 Texas Legislature

ET3 at the State Level

Effective Sept 1!



Third Special Session 2021
American Rescue Plan Act
$21.7 million for EMS recruitment and education!



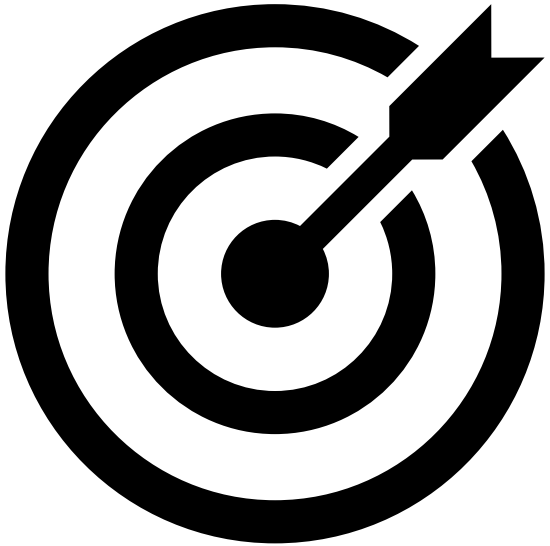
TEXAS EMS ALLIANCE

Checklist What's Next in 2022?

The Big Issues: 2nd Half of 2022

DC

No Surprises Act Final Rule



TX

Medicaid Rates

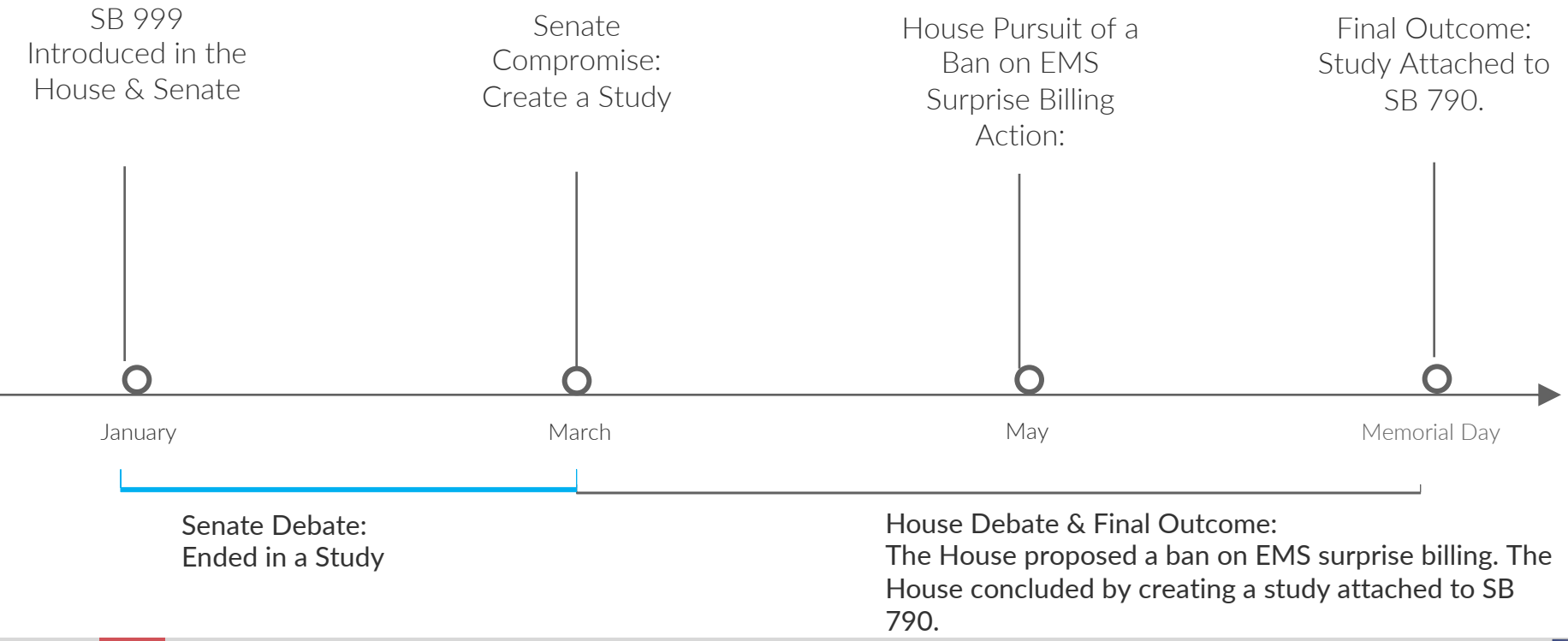
TX

TDI Surprise Billing Study; 2023 Legislature

TX

Future Regulatory Structure of EMS

SB 999's Evolution 2021 Texas Legislature



Out-of-Network Billing TEMSA's Messaging

TEXAS EMS ALLIANCE

TEXAS EMS AGENCIES PUT PATIENTS FIRST:
TDI'S PROVEN ARBITRATION
WILL TAKE PATIENTS OUT OF THE MIDDLE

EMS AGENCIES PLAY AN ESSENTIAL ROLE IN TEXAS COMMUNITIES

Texas EMS agencies are an essential part of every Texas community and serve a unique role in the state's health care system. EMS providers are the only segment of the health care industry designed to respond to the location of a patient suffering from an acute onset of illness or a traumatic injury, provide patients with initial care on the scene and provide timely access to a specialized segment of the health care system, such as a trauma hospital.

In an increasing number of rural communities, the local EMS agency is the only health care provider in the community. Simply put, EMS is a critical public health safety net upon which many Texans rely.

COMMERCIAL HEALTH PLANS RARELY INCLUDE EMS AGENCIES IN NETWORKS

While EMS is possibly the most essential service in health care, commercial health plans choose to disregard the local community in which their insureds live by failing to adequately compensate the local EMS agency. In many cases, health plans do not even attempt to engage or include EMS in a network arrangement that would offer fair and adequate compensation to cover the cost of care provided.

EMS agencies only have two sources for funding their essential services: revenue generated by patient services or taxpayer support. When EMS agencies are not adequately compensated for their services, either local taxpayers must make up the difference or reduce services to balance budgets. This means fewer ambulances, slower response times or agency closures. As a result, fair reimbursement is critical to maintaining the EMS public health safety net, ensuring patients' access to care, and reducing the taxpayer burden.

TEXAS EMS AGENCIES: WE WANT TO HELP SOLVE THE OUT-OF-NETWORK BILLING ISSUE

Providing the best care to patients represents an EMS agency's top and only concern. And Texas EMS agencies want to extend this prioritization of the patient by working with lawmakers to remove patients from the middle of payment disputes.

The data from the arbitration process created by SB 1264 are clear: patients are benefitting. TEMSA strongly encourages the 87th Legislature to remove patients from the middle of EMS billing disputes and allow EMS agencies to access TDI's arbitration process. Specifically, SB 999 should direct the arbitrator to consider rates established by local governmental bodies.

SB 790 & Out-of-Network Billing What's Next?

A Study Before the 2023 Texas Legislature

- SB 790 created a study of EMS billing that will be due before the 2023 Texas Legislature meets.

TEMSA Will Provide an Official Response to the Study

- TEMSA will provide an official response to the study and educate lawmakers.

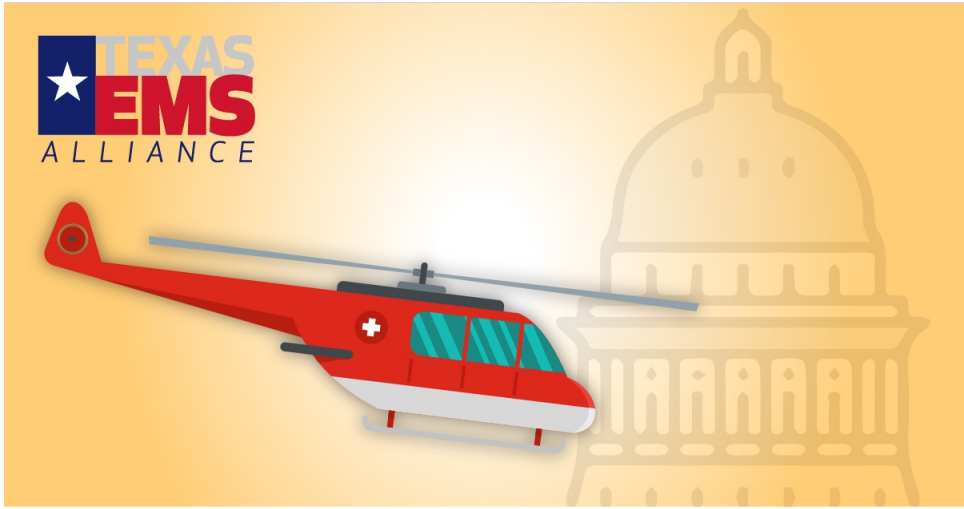
Action by the 2023 Texas Legislature

- The 2023 Texas Legislature is likely to act on EMS out-of-network billing.

SB 790 Out-of-Network Billing & Air Medical

Signed into Law

- Senator Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo).
- Includes the study on ground EMS.
- County-owned air medical providers will have the option to not balance bill as a result of SB 790.



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