



***Wyoming-Erie Regional
Emergency Medical Services Council***

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On March 1, 2023, the Wyoming Erie Regional Emergency Services Council (WEREMSCO) unanimously voted to oppose 2024 Executive Budget Part S. This is the second consecutive year that Governor Hochul has proposed Part S in the Executive Budget's initial draft. Both proposals surprised and dismayed the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) community and were crafted without input from EMS stakeholders and experts.

We appreciate Governor Hochul's implicit acknowledgments that Article 30 needs revision to better assist EMS. However, attempting to revise Article 30, with the draft Part S, in the manner proposed will not produce the intended results of providing EMS the support it needs to improve quality, enhance service reliability, and ensure system sustainability. Instead, Part S will produce a paradoxical effect, undermining the efficacy of EMS systems across our state and placing in greater jeopardy the future of an indispensable service.

Alarming, Part S proposes to divest our State Emergency Medical Services Council (SEMSCO) of many current responsibilities. Also, Part S promises to disenfranchise regional and statewide subject matter experts from providing any input. Finally, Part S will exacerbate the EMS staffing crisis by diluting an already thin pool of EMS providers. Part S – and its innumerable perils – will produce devastating consequences by removing regional EMS input for improving efficient services. Those perils and their attendant consequences could have been avoided had EMS community stakeholders and subject matter experts been included in creating the Part S draft.

Moreover, if adopted as written, Part S will unnecessarily add another layer of government, deepen bureaucratic entrenchment, stifling progress and spending scarce financial resources to fund the newly created ten (10) oversight boards. WEREMSCO will be divided between two (2) of these oversight boards. Those meager resources would be better spent by investing in existing systems and supporting agencies whose members have worked tirelessly to keep vital services available in their communities.

The problems EMS confronts daily are largely attributable to underfunding and overregulation. Part S will do little, if anything, to resolve the funding constraint and will only intensify the already onerous regulatory burdens under which EMS toils every day. This untoward force multiplier effect will severely hamstring EMS agencies, driving many out of existence.

Finally, Part S will vitiate the roles and responsibilities of REMSCOs throughout the state. The councils will be reduced to inconsequential advisory boards with no ability to carry out their missions as set forth in the law. The REMSCOs were designed to place decision-making authority where knowledge and expertise reside – in the local EMS communities. This decentralized design structure allows REMSCOs to address local conditions and ensures that all voices are heard. Decisions rendered by a remote, centralized authority will never be as informed as decisions made in the local community, as local EMS stakeholders will be less involved in the decision process due to distance and availability. Decision-making authority must remain with the REMSCOs to ensure that decisions are made by those who will bear the consequences of the decisions.

The WEREMSCO requests you join us in our opposition to Part S and allowing the SEMSCO and REMSCOs to continue their work to change the public health law in a way that engages and empowers our industry's subject matter experts. Ensuring that the SEMSCO and REMSCOs remain empowered is the only way to ensure that the needs of an incredibly diverse population are met applicable to that NYS region.

Carol Staffehl EMT-P, Chair
Wyoming Erie Regional Emergency Medical Services Council