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2025-2026 Legislative Session

Summary of New EMS Bills

- **Senate Bill (SB) 181 / Assembly Bill (AB) 197: Levy Limit Exemption for Regional (County-Sized) EMS Districts** - Sens. Marklein (R-Spring Green) and James (R-Thorp) and Reps. Kurtz (R-Wonewoc) and Gustafson (R-Fox Crossing) - In an effort to help improve EMS access and the availability of EMTs throughout the state, the authors have prepared three bills with a number of elements aimed at supporting local governments, their first responders, and Wisconsin residents. The first of three bills in this package includes the following provisions:
  - Creates a levy limit exemption for costs associated with providing regional EMS through participation in a joint emergency services district or through intergovernmental agreements (IGA) to provide EMS if the area served is at least 232 square miles or includes at least eight municipalities (including cities, villages, and towns).
    - The area served and minimum number of municipalities is based on the smallest county in Wisconsin by land size and the smallest county by number of municipalities. Recognizing that county borders may not always be the most efficient or expedient service territories, the authors drafted this provision to mimic the levy limit exemption for county-wide EMS districts while allowing municipalities to form their own county-sized EMS territory.
  - If an emergency medical service meets the minimum requirements above on shared services (district or IGA) and area served (square miles or number of municipalities) and only one entity is responsible for the coordination of EMS across the service territory, the participating municipalities are eligible to have the costs for EMS exempt from the levy limits. The annual growth in the levy limit exemption under this bill is equal to the increase of the Consumer Price Index plus 5%.
    - This compares to the existing joint fire and EMS district levy limit exemption (§ 66.0602 (3) (h), Wis. Stats.) which allows an annual increase of CPI plus 2% and requires each municipal governing body in the district to pass a resolution.
  - Additionally, the growth in the proposed levy limit exemption would be exempt from the calculation for eligibility to the Expenditure Restraint Program.

- **SB 182 / AB 198: EMS Education Access, Certification Cost Reimbursement, and Creating a PSAP Pilot** - Sens. Marklein (R-Spring Green) and James (R-Thorp) and Reps. Kurtz (R-Wonewoc), Novak (R-Dodgeville), and Summerfield (R-Bloomer) - The second of three bills in this package includes the following provisions:
  - Requires the Technical College System Board to provide grants to technical colleges that train and prepare individuals for initial certification or licensure as an emergency medical responder (EMR) or emergency medical technician (EMT). If this legislation is passed, the authors intend on funding this provision in the 2025-2027 State Budget.

- Requires the Higher Educational Aids Board to reimburse individuals or employers for the cost of tuition and materials necessary to qualify for initial certification or licensure as an EMR or EMT. The authors intend on funding this provision in the budget.
- Creates a Live 911 Pilot Program where the Department of Military Affairs would provide grants to enable real-time video and multimedia communications between public safety answering points (PSAP) and individuals who call for emergency services. The pilot would likely be limited to a few locations around the state, with the results of the pilot program reported back to the legislature for consideration of expanding the program in future sessions. The authors intend on funding this provision in the budget.

- **SB 183 / AB 199: Non-Transport MA Reimbursement, EMT Scope of Practice Report, and ERP Exemption** - Sens. Marklein (R-Spring Green) and James (R-Thorp) and Reps. Kurtz (R-Wonewoc), Zimmerman (R-River Falls), and Summerfield (R-Bloomer) - The third of three bills in this package includes the following provisions:
  - Increases medical assistance (MA) (i.e., Medicaid) reimbursement for non-transport EMS calls from the maximum allowable rate under the billing code for "ambulance response and treatment, no transport" to the maximum allowable rate for the billing code "ambulance service, basic life support, emergency transport" beginning January 1, 2027.
  - Requires the Emergency Medical Services Board, in consultation with the Department of Health Services and Technical College System Board, to annually submit a report to the legislature on the scope of practice of EMR and EMT practitioners and how any scope of practice changes may affect training for these individuals.
  - Exempts the growth of costs for the current levy limit exemption for certain fire and EMS districts (cited above) from eligibility for the Expenditure Restraint Program.

*The League has registered **in-favor** of all three pieces of legislation.*