

Emergency Medical Services Advisory Committee Meeting

April 14, 2023, at 1:00pm

Roll Call

Core Members

Dr. Dale Carrison- Chair

Bodie Golla

Carl Bottorf

James Wohlers

Markus Hirt

Sean Burke

Steve Towne

James Johnston

Ex-officio Members

Bobbie Sullivan

Dr. Douglas Fraser

Dr. Fermin Leguen

Andrea Esp

Douglas Oxborrow

Meeting Attendees

Committee Meeting commenced at 1:00pm, location 4150 Technology Way, Room 303, Carson City NV 89506. Via Teams and in person.

Markus Hirt

OK, this is Markus Hirt for the record, we are calling this meeting to order again after some technical difficulties. This is the EMS Advisory Committee meeting. Today's date is April 14th. It is now about 1:20 PM. Miss Anderson, would you do a roll call again, please?

Brianna Anderson

Yes, absolutely. I'm still letting people in, so people might still be trickling in, but I'm going to go ahead and start with Doctor Dale Carrison. Moving on, we're going to go to Carl Bottorf.

Carl Bottorf

Present.

Brianna Anderson

Thank you, Carl. Moving on to Sean Burke.

Sean Burke

Sean Burke is present.

Brianna Anderson

Awesome. Thank you, Sean. Moving on Bodie Golla.

Bodie Golla

Present.

Brianna Anderson

Thank you. James Johnston.

James Johnston

Present.

Brianna Anderson

Thank you, James. Moving on, Markus Hirt

Markus Hirt

present.

Brianna Anderson

Thank you, Markus. Steve Towne.

Steve Towne

Present.

Brianna Anderson

Thank you. James Wohlers. Have you joined us today? Bobbie Sullivan.

Bobbie Sullivan

Present.

Brianna Anderson

Doctor Douglas Fraser.

Douglas Fraser

Present on the call. Thank you.

Brianna Anderson

Thank you. Doctor Leguen.

Dr. Fermin Leguen

Yeah, this is doctor Leguen. Do you hear me?

Brianna Anderson

Yes, we can hear you. Thank you so much. Moving on, is Andrea present.

Sabrina Brasuell

This is the Sabrina Brasuell, Andrea Esp will not be in attendance today.

Brianna Anderson

Thank you, Sabrina. And Douglas Oxborrow

Douglas Oxborrow

Present.

Brianna Anderson

Thank you, Doug. Now moving on, go ahead and take it, Marcus. Thank you everybody.

Markus Hirt

This is Markus Hirt, for the record, I'm opening this meeting up for public comment. Public comment may be presented in person by computer, phone, or written comment. Due to time considerations, each individual offering public comment will be limited to no more than 5 minutes. A person may also have comments added to the meeting by submitting them in writing, either in addition to testifying or in lieu of testifying, written comments may be submitted electronically, before, during, or after the meeting. By emailing Bobbie Sullivan at b.sullivan@health.nv.gov, you may also mail written comments to the division of Public and Behavioral Health 4126 technology way, Carson City, NV 89706. Open for public comment now. Chief, would you state your name?

Rich Harvey

Good afternoon. For the record, my name is Rich Harvey. I'm the Fire Chief with central Lyon County Fire Protection district and the 2nd Vice president and Government affairs representative for the Nevada Fire Chiefs Association. Our membership is the fire departments and fire districts, many of them volunteers serving Nevada and Nevadans. And while fire is prominent in our name and our mission, our members are also the largest providers of emergency medical services in Nevada. Responding to the 911 calls of almost all Nevadans. It is a bit disappointing to be here during public comment as most of you know or by now are aware that the Nevada Fire Chiefs Association has had significant involvement in the development of AB 358 and could or should be expected to contribute to the conversation of AB 358 on your agenda, had we been invited. AB 358 is a direct result of an ineffective, inefficient, and unresponsive State EMS. Program for years from the development of the White Paper on the state of EMS challenges and opportunities within the state of Nevada, published by the Northern Nevada Fire Chiefs Association in 2016, which identified issues at State EMS including poor communication and responsiveness, a lack of leadership and direction, cumbersome processes for certifications, licensing permits and course approvals, and inconsistent or unqualified opinion on standard medical orders. To the 2021 Nevada Fire Chiefs working group on EMS, our attempts to work with State EMS on improvements to the system have been ignored, rejected, or smothered in excuses. We are tired of the excuses. AB 358 is an actionable item. It moves State EMS into the Department of Public Safety as a Bureau, an upgrade in standing that can be used to improve visibility, focus attention, create impetus, effective positive change in state EMS and improve the delivery of emergency medical services to all Nevadans. It is not the solution to all issues, but it is a step forward. Clark County paramedics can get their license in a day and the rest of Nevada we get an extension letter in the same old excuses. We are also weary of the opinions that EMS should not be based in fire departments and districts. That is simply not the current reality or the trend in Nevada or the nation. Reno Fire, Truckee Meadows fire, Sparks fire not only run EMS calls with REMSA, but are adding paramedics and ambulances and transporting patients to keep up with the demand for services in Washoe County. Very similar growth to fire-based EMS is also clearing in Clark County and counties like Central, Lyon, Douglas, Storey and Carson City are

expanding their existing fire-based EMS programs. The federal government incorporated EMS into the United States Fire Administration in 2012 and the state of Utah just last month passed Senate Bill 64, which moved oversight regarding emergency medical services from the Department of Health and Human Services to the Department of Public Safety. A recent study on prehospital 911 emergency medical response underscored quote the reality today that the fire service has become the first line medical responder for critical illness and injury in virtually every community in America end quote. The Nevada Ambulance Association and some of this board may think fire is bad, but the reality is we're not going anywhere except to the next 911 call. I know a medical director who said it better than I. There is no need to separate fire and EMS. Rather we should find ways to support both with the objective of protecting our communities the best we possibly can. AB 358 represents over a decade of work invested in improving the delivery of emergency medical services in our community. EMS in Nevada is growing, changing, and maturing. In the delivery to the public, our regulatory system must mature along with it. We cannot tolerate anything less than a responsible, collaborative, cooperative and professional environment whereby the entire system benefits and regulators and stakeholders are finally on the same team rather than in opposition to one another. AB 358 puts in Nevada on the path to achieving the mission of State EMS to promote and support an EMS system that provides prompt, efficient, and appropriate emergency medical care, ambulance transportation, and air ambulance transport for the people in Nevada. Nevada Fire Chiefs Association would appreciate your support of AB 358, in the absence of any other proposed solutions. Anything else would be to support the status quo and ineffective, inefficient, and unresponsive State EMS system. Thank you.

Markus Hirt

Thank you, Chief Harvey. Any other public comments?

Chris McHan

This is Chris McHan with Elko County Ambulance. I have a public comment.

Markus Hirt

Go ahead, Mr. McHan.

Chris McHan

Thank you and I'm glad to see the committees considering this bill and potentially going to take some action and support or vice versa. I was present last week as the testimony for AB 358 occurred in the legislature and I certainly value the fire departments and what they do for EMS here in Elko County we integrate with our fire departments heavily and depend on them a lot for first response. As we all know, emergency medical services is exactly that, it's medical services and it has changed a lot over the years from when we started. As you know, funeral homes and that sort of stuff that just took people to hospital, and nowadays we're seeing community Paramedicine we're seeing mobile integrated health, we're seeing telemedicine. When we look at the ET3 model that's on the national level for funding, it's

all about doing healthcare out of facilities. That's probably my biggest concern with AB 358 is that it moves our EMS service and system away from healthcare. It is medical care, it's medical care to our citizens and communities across the state, whether it's done by our fire department, or independent ambulance, private ambulance, or a hospital-based ambulance, it looks a little different across our state. When we look at the permitted agencies, they're listed on the state EMS website. 27% of them are fire based, the other 73% of agencies that the EMS office permits are not fire based. They're private ambulances, public ambulances, ground transportation, air ambulances and that group is trying to be represented by this committee, that's why we're here together today. This committee is designed to represent all the vast parts of EMS. Some of the specific things that I thought about since last week's testimony is, I think the EMS Office has made a lot of progress. I know that the Chief Harvey and those who are supporting this bill mentioned the White Paper. Some specific things that have happened since then, we have had training centers implemented and as I remember, that came from this very committee at the time they suggested to the state EMS office, doing training centers and that has come to fruition. I know Elko County has been a training Center for several years now and we absolutely love it. We can manage our own CEU's, and the state comes and audits us from time to time to make sure that we're doing what we need to be. But our CEU's are just easy and move forward like the fire side. You know they don't have to get CEU's approved through the fire Marshall's office every time. I'm sure many of you can think back to, you know, 5-10 years ago when we would fill out a paper application and we would mail it in, and then you start calling the State EMS Office and you're wondering, where did our paperwork go? Can't figure it out. I know for Elko County. At one point, we started accumulating all our stuff and then we would make the five-hour drive to hand deliver our licenses. And even then, some of our licensing stuff just disappeared because it got lost. Now the state has moved to an online system through the state application portal. I have found that far more reliable, the delay that we do still see is because of background checks. I do have three providers right now that have been waiting for background checks since September. As a reminder, that is done by DPS, which is the very place that AB 358 suggests moving the EMS office to. I'm not impressed with how they're doing on our background checks and how they're communicating what they need or don't need to be able to do those background checks. Makes me a little concerned for how the EMS office would do within DPS. The other thing I think that is in progress right now is this committee made the suggestions to look at when licenses expire for each provider within the state. I know that that is moving forward to where we're going to change the licensing to birthdays. If I understand correct, that is going to prevent 4000 plus people needing to renew every March 31st.

Douglas Oxborrow

Chris, sorry to interrupt. You have 15 seconds left.

Chris McHan

Just really, I'm just getting that, I don't think that this bill is productive for EMS in our state. Thank you.

Markus Hirt

Thank you, Mr. McHan. Any other public comments?

Kevin Romero

Yeah, this is Kevin Romero. Can you hear me, OK?

Markus Hirt

We can hear you.

Kevin Romero

Good afternoon, Mr. Vice Chairman, members of the Committee for the record, Kevin Romero, REMSA health in Nevada and Ambulance Association and former chairman of this committee as well. As you know AB 358 was heard by the Legislative Committee last week. It's my understanding that this bill is going to move forward but with multiple amendments that have been made, we have not seen those amendments yet, nor do we know what those entails. But we do know that there were numerous entities including the Nevada Ambulance Association, which is a conglomerate of all transport ambulance agencies across the state that are privately owned, that also opposed AB 358. So, I would encourage this committee to reach out to the Legislative Committee members and the Governor's office to correct some comments that were made in that hearing, you know, Urban EMS has been represented on your committee. In the past, Reno Fire Department, Truckee Meadows College and others have been represented on your committee, so that is just not the case. It is a statewide committee that represents everything in the state of Nevada. 358 opposed because EMS should remain under healthcare, not a State Fire Marshall or Public Safety as stated previously. Mobile integrated health, community paramedicine, telehealth, they all work directly with healthcare providers. This causes impacts on emergency department capacity, hospital bed availability and other things that work in conjunction with hospital systems. We do believe that the fire department plays an integral part in EMS. In fact, the Fire Department is an EMS provider and in plenty of areas we're not here to dispute that and we do also believe that we should work together to provide the best care possible. The future of EMS falls within healthcare. With that being said, it's called prehospital care for a reason, not public safety. And I'd like to thank you for taking my comments.

Markus Hirt

Thank you, Mr. Romero. Any other public comment?

Paul Ward

This is Paul Ward for public comment.

Markus Hirt

Go ahead, Mr. Ward.

Paul Ward

Good afternoon. Appreciate you having me on. Paul Ward, for the record. I am the Executive Director for Medex Air, one of the air medical providers for Northern Nevada and I would like to echo my colleagues' comments in recognition that we firmly believe that EMS needs to remain a division of public health. Again, this is not to disparage any efforts that the fire service provides towards emergency medical services. They provide an integral role in responding to medical emergencies in this area. However, given the organization that I represent, which is air medical, which becomes a critical care level service. That level of physician oversight is only accomplished through being a part of the Department of Health and having it under the public safety just does not align with our mission to provide critical care level service. It just doesn't work. Again, we appreciate our fire colleagues. We appreciate the opportunity to collaborate with them, but I do have to candidly point out that the conversation or the remarks of the gentleman at the beginning of the meeting did not sound collaborative in nature and much more hostile in nature than anything. So, we strongly oppose this assembly bill and would appreciate that. So that is all I have, thank you.

Markus Hirt

Thank you, Mr. Ward. Any other public comment? Mr. Brady, you have a hand raised. Would you like to enter a public comment?

Brandon Brady

Yes, good afternoon. For the record Brandon Brady, Tahoe Douglas Fire Battalion Chief in charge of EMS. Just wanted to put in my bid for the support of Chief Harvey's statement and I think there seems to be a lot of focus on fire-based EMS and wanting to go under public safety for the benefit of fire. Don't think that's the case, I think what we can understand with great respect to the EMS division is they're clearly understaffed and underfunded under DHHS, which is what's causing much of the problems with processing applications and the fact that we've lost all oversight, as agencies of the application process. So, I think his last sentence was important to remember is that you know a vote against change for better staffing and better funding is just accepting the status quo. Thank you.

Markus Hirt

Thank you, Mr. Brady. Any other public comment? Looks like there's another hand raised. Mr. Whitlock, would you like to enter public comment?

Cory Whitlock

Yeah. Good afternoon, everybody. Thanks for having me on. My name is Corey Whitlock. I'm Battalion Chief over here at Reno Tahoe Airport and I would like to put my support to Chief Harvey as well as a Battalion Chief, Brady. Just so you guys know a little history. I have been down in Las Vegas for the last 12 years. Recently came up to Northern Nevada. I went through a lot of the processes that we have up

here, and unfortunately had a very archaic approach to recertification and reciprocity. Unfortunately, being a small department like us who just went ALS, I've seen the same problems with multiple members. So, echoing my colleagues is, I think more oversight is needed and better funding because I just I think the people that are doing it right now, it is not their fault. They're a little overwhelmed and they need more support and I really feel like moving them under a different entity will help that. Once again, I appreciate all the stuff they're doing. I don't think it's their fault, but I'm just saying from a newcomer up to Northern Nevada, or coming back to Northern Nevada, I've only witnessed very difficult times getting people through, like a paramedic who applied in February 16th for a small department who has 15 members right now. I just got a call Tuesday that he finally got his fingerprints back, and that we could put him to work. For a small department it's a killer. It kills us. Our staffing is hinging on this. So that's all I have to say. I appreciate you guys' time. Thank you again.

Markus Hirt

Thank you, Mr. Whitlock. Any other public comment? Mr. Holland, go ahead.

Dustin Holland

Hi there. Thank you. Can you hear me?

Markus Hirt

We can hear you.

Dustin Holland

My name's Dustin Holland. I'm the medical director for Carson City, Central Lyon, EMS board certified. Primary job is a full-time emergency medicine physician. You know, I've read through this a lot, and I would like to voice my support for 358. You know, I've heard several comments about EMS issues that would come about under the Department of Public Safety versus Public Health. You know, I trained and did my EMS fellowship in Indiana, where EMS falls solely under the Department of Public Safety. I just don't think a lot of those concerns are valid. I think they're fears of change, and we did not really realize any of the barriers that that have been brought up in some of these concerns of being under the Department of Public Safety, I was able to build a fantastic community paramedicine program, you know, in the system that was under public safety, our physician oversight in the Indianapolis Metropolitan area was, at the risk of insulting or, you know, making some people mad, it was decades more advanced than what we have here in Nevada in terms of physician, cooperation, communication and just advancing EMS with evidence based medicine and all of this occurred under the Department of Public Safety. So, I just, I would encourage the EMS Advisory Committee to consider the reality of some of these concerns before just looking just at the name public health versus public safety. Just because it has health and the name, it doesn't necessarily mean that it's in the best interest of all ambulance companies. I've worked EMS here in Las Vegas, I've worked private EMS down in Las Vegas. You know, I oversee fire-based EMS agencies up here and I think integrating and advancing our EMS systems in this way would be a step in the right direction and bring Nevada a little bit more into the future of EMS and

where it's headed nationally. Just as a disclosure, I also serve as the American College of Emergency Physicians, EMS section chair nationally have seen many, EMS agencies around the country and you know again, EMS can function in in any role, whether it's public health or public safety, but I have not seen some of the concerns come about that that have been mentioned in earlier testimony. So, thank you for your for your time.

Markus Hirt

Thank you, Doctor Holland. Any other public comment? Ok, seeing none. Moving to the next agenda item. For possible action is a discussion and review of Assembly Bill 358, proposed by the 2023 legislature regarding revisions to provisions governing emergency medical services and possible action to authorize staff to send a letter to the Assembly Committee regarding the legislation. First, I'd like to ask Mrs. Sullivan to give a statement regarding the concerns that were brought up by several fire departments, et cetera, in response to the Assembly bill.

Bobbie Sullivan

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Bobbie Sullivan, for the record. I'll address as many as I quickly wrote down during those presentations. One of the concerns that has been frequently brought up is the delay for background results and as I believe Mr. McHan spoke to that's something that is not within our control. We must wait for those results to come from DPS. They are a largely manual process at this time. They are looking to automate, that has not been completed yet. I have an example of a background that we received, from the date of the fingerprinting to the prints being generated was six weeks. There was another one that I had pulled recently that was seven months and another one at eight months. I met with DPS staff recently, after we outlined any corrections or changes, we could make on the EMS side. The results are returned to EMS through the interdepartmental mail system, a couple of the changes that we've looked implement is anyone who lives in Nevada, were requiring them to complete live scan so that we can track those submissions easier. Out-of-state applicants can do a live scan, or they can do a hard card depending on the state, if it accepts and sends live scan back and forth. The other thing that DPS agreed to, would be for EMS staff to pick up those results. They're going to pull them from the stacks that go out, they'll separate them. We'll pick them up at least three times a week, more frequently if necessary, or if those results are in. When we get those individuals applying to us that are from other jurisdictions a couple of years ago, a policy was instituted, and I think it was presented to this board at the time. If you have someone coming from out of state that has had a recent background result and has cleared that background result, we have a policy that was approved by administration and our DAG to allow us to issue a provisional attendant license so that the individual EMT, advanced, EMT or paramedic could complete their FTO ride along. So once those backgrounds results came in, we could immediately issue that, and they could be turned to the street if their agency is ready too. Speaking to the delay in applications, I do have to say that we have an amazing staff. We start sending out reminders at 90, 60 and 30 days for participants who are eligible for renewal to get their stuff started. We will also accept applications as early as six months. We had over 3,500 candidates. That were eligible for renewal this year and at the last week of the month, we were down to 350 folks that had waited till the last possible minute to submit it. So as of the end of the month, we had reviewed

everything up until I believe March 21st. So, we were staying fairly on top of all of those. And the reason again that extension was sent out was in part, related to applicants waiting till the last minute for submission. We've seen a great turn around and folks applying for the training centers, that was part of that White Paper and John Mohler helped bring that into that NAC change, and I believe that's dated 2017. It provides the flexibility for agencies to present CEU training without having to go through the application process and meeting that 20-day deadline that's in NAC. The only thing that it does not speak to is if you're holding a full course, you must submit for approval of full courses because that ties into the National Registry and in most cases, accreditation. I believe there was testimony regarding credit for PHTLS pals and CLS, and I would also add into their CPR cards for years since it is a nationally approved program, those CE's are automatically awarded based on initial class or renewal, so there's no need for submission of that and if I missed any that would be anything, I'd be happy to take questions.

Markus Hirt

Miss Sullivan, would you like to address the delay in recertifications?

Bobbie Sullivan

We're currently not seeing that much of a delay, except for this last week that we were working on the last part of March, and we were down to 370. I'd have to check the exact date of renewals that were submitted during that last week and staff are getting through those for the initial renewal, so that employers such as Banner Churchill has that information, they can present that your staff can show that you have submitted your application because you as the applicant can pull that, show it to your employer that we're getting there and then at that point when staff reviews those because we have just limited staff for that we send out the reminder that you need to correct something or that it's there and you can print it. Within Image Trend, there's the personnel contact, each agency has the option to go in and look at your personnel roster at any time during renewals, during renewal permit, et cetera, and you can see the status of the applicant or the provider and if there's any issues then we can go there. I think there was one other thing that comes to mind about an application notification not sent back, if we see any delays about getting back to folks on their applications, it's because they're not completed, or they haven't hit the queue for us to review. We also instituted a change where, when an attendant license application is submitted, it needs the approval of the agency so that it can be paid for. We change the software program so that the agency would get notification to reduce that turnaround time as well. Does that answer your question?

Markus Hirt

Thank you, Mrs. Sullivan. Do any of the other committee members have any questions for Mrs. Sullivan? Hearing none, do any of the other committee members have any comment? To the statements made today.

Bodie Golla

Bodie Golla, for the record.

Markus Hirt

Bodie go ahead.

Bodie Golla

Yeah, I'm in the minority here. I'm in support of 358 for several reasons and probably my main reason, without echoing everything else that's already been said is, at some point, you know if you guys remember, we took this all the way up to director Whitley's office to get a lot of changes completed. At this point, it's little to no changes. So, I mean obviously something needs to change with the upper management leadership to be able to get our NRS's and our NAC's amended and be able to get these problems fixed. So pretty much I support 358 going to public safety.

Markus Hirt

Mr. Golla, would you mind outlining the changes that were requested?

Bodie Golla

I mean absolutely I can pull up the documents. I have a long list of items. If you want to take the time to go through those again, they've been on our agenda time after time.

Markus Hirt

Ok, I don't think we need to go too deep into this. Asking other committee members, Carl, do you have any comments?

Carl Bottorf

I do, Markus, I reviewed the video testimony that was presented to the Assembly committee, and I would have to say, I don't necessarily feel opposed to the move, but the substantiations to do that, I think cause division in EMS versus unity. So, those were those were of concern. I guess I'd be interested to hear how other committee members felt about that as well. I think some of the problems that Bobbie laid out, their undeniable, but it doesn't mean the problems will get fixed just by switching to a different state agency. I'd want to hear more on that. I'd want to learn more on that. I hope that makes sense.

Markus Hirt

Thank you, Carl. James Wohlers was not on here, right? Do you have any comment? Steve Town is present here.

Steve Towne

Steve Towne for the record, in reviewing AB 358, I've reviewed all the pages on it. My feelings, viewpoints and opinions are not by any means antifire. I've spent over half my career in fire EMS. That's

where I began on an ambulance, on a fire truck. I share the same concerns, aggravations, and roadblocks with our current agency there at Banner. Delays in getting background checks, being a smaller agency, it affects us as well as being able to get new hires on board. It takes us quite a substantial amount of time. We just hired 3-4 people since February, and it took four to five weeks to get through the background check processing. The other processing, the personnel, even given that it was a renewal cycle, work through as fast as they could, but they can't go beyond the background check. Working through our guidelines, getting those approved, there's a lot of things that I would like to see changed. There's a lot of frustrations that I've had as a leader of the department as well. There's very much a personnel issue in the State Office of EMS and that is a lack of personnel. It is a lack of funding and a lack of support for those personnel. My concerns with AB 358 are that, just moving it to another Agency for oversight, there's nothing that outlines how that's going to be fixed, there's nothing that outlines they're going to increase the number of personnel, there's nothing in there that I see that that outlines how that is going to happen as far as funding, there's no additional funding mechanisms and AB 358, that would assist in providing a better level of service. I think everyone, whether your fire, hospital based, private air or whatever would 100% agree that there's a lot of inefficiencies built into the office of EMS. I don't foresee that changing much. As AB 358 is written, other than the change, there are a few good things that I've seen in there about the provisional licenses for EMT's and advanced, I wholeheartedly support the mental health hotline and everything that was outlined in there. So, there's a lot of good things in there. But the funding mechanism, how do we better support, aside from just saying, yep, we're going to get better support from the fire Marshall's office, I just don't foresee that changing that and being beneficial. I feel like there's a lot of brain trust in the state of Nevada, whether you're Fixed wing, Rotor Wing, Hospital based, county, third service, private enterprise, fire based, there's a huge brain trust here, I think. We should be working together more collaboratively. This is one avenue, if we could have the attendance, we can have the participation, we could work together to better address the concerns that have been mentioned. But I think we're throwing the baby out with the bathwater. By moving that so that is, that is my opinion.

Markus Hirt

Thank you, Mr. Towne. James Johnson, do you have any comment?

James Johnston

Yes, Sir. Can you hear me? James Johnston, for the record.

Markus Hirt

We can hear you.

James Johnston

So I joined this committee for one reason, and it's most likely the same reason we're all in the same room is to make EMS better in Nevada. It sounds like we all have the same concerns, even in opposition of the bill. With the bill and without it, we still have a lack of funding, lack of personnel in EMS and the supports needed to run, the exact thing that we all want and that's just streamline everything and make

the system easier, especially when you can get your national registry done within a day and then must resubmit that and then wait. So, are there roads to getting things better? Absolutely. The issues are getting a little bit brighter. We have committees that people are caring about now and showing up and trying to make things better. When we talked about the changing the renewal date to your birthday that went out to everybody. All the feedback that came in, I mean everything is looking better if we can all work together and come up with a positive solution. I think suddenly now we're faced with trying to make it work when everyone's unhappy. I think I think Battalion Chief Whitlock said it the best, everyone's dissatisfied, but we need a solution and simply changing the solution or changing that the answers to meet the needs of everybody isn't going to work. We need to start with some good ideas to make it work within the system. Then if that doesn't work, maybe we take this on next time and move it over.

Markus Hirt

Thank you, Mr. Johnston. This is Markus Hirt for the record, I'll give a statement as well. I'm in agreeance. First, fire versus EMS shouldn't be a versus. It should be very collaborative, and we should all be working together. As I agree with Mr. Towne regarding this bill not addressing any kind of financial or fiscal issues at the State EMS office, it being understaffed, I don't see that in that bill. I do not see how moving it under the Fire Marshal's Office would fix issues like DPS being slow with background checks, so recertifications going any faster because of these issues that are beyond the control of the of the State EMS office, I think you know up staffing, better funding is really, really the solution maybe in some regards also better accountability and oversight. I just don't see a lot of this addressed in this bill, and I'm not even opposed to it moving under the Fire Marshall's office. I just don't see a solution for the issues that have been on the horizon, in the last couple of years. There have been improvements made and by my experience, not only as a committee member but also as a leader in an organization for me it's air ambulance. The State EMS office has been responsive with any issues that I have been bringing up or, you know, delays in certification, et cetera. So, I think the State EMS office is really trying to be as responsive and as efficient as they can with the means that they have right now. So, I'm thinking, you know funding and up staffing should be included in the bill and that should be one of the things to be focused on. And that is the end of my statement. Does any of the committee members have any kind of motions to entertain?

Bodie Golla

Bodie for the record, I have a comment.

Markus Hirt

Go ahead, Bodie.

Bodie Golla

So I do have one concern. Do we have our legal representation here for our committee?

Markus Hirt

It does not appear that our DAG was able to join.

Bodie Golla

So just before the committee here, I just like to address a concern and I'm not sure the legalities on this as far as if our committee can even form an opinion to turn into the legislators, or if we must do that as individuals. So, I'm just not sure where we stand legally. What if we can even draft this letter legally and forward it off so.

Markus Hirt

Let's see whether we can get the DAG on here. Bodie, I do understand your concern. Let's give this a 5-minute break. While Mrs. Sullivan is trying to get legal opinion.

Markus Hirt

OK, 5 minutes are over. We are resuming the meeting at 2:13 PM. Bodie, just hopefully to put you a little bit at ease of the agenda itself was approved by the DAG. Is that correct Mrs. Sullivan?

Bobbie Sullivan

That is correct. So, since the DAG approved the agenda, it specifies that action could be taken submitting a letter to the assembly, it should be covered. Does any of the committee members have any concerns with that?

Steve Towne

Steve Towne for the record, I have no concerns. I believe it's within the purview of our Advisory Board duties that we can provide a letter supporting or not supporting this this legislative action.

Markus Hirt

Ok, and with, do I hear a motion from any of the committee members?

Carl Bottorf

Hey, Marcus. it's the fire chiefs representative still there.

Markus Hirt

They are still here.

Carl Bottorf

Would it be appropriate to, just try to ask him what the insights are and what the thinking process was to fix some of the problems that were described by moving us from one governing agency to another? He was probably involved with creating the bill, right? Where does that take us and how does that make us better? And how does that make us more unified? As State EMS, not just Northern Nevada or Northwestern Nevada, but as a whole? I don't know the rules well enough, but the questions are in my mind, and if they're in mind, perhaps they're in other committee members as well.

Bobbie Sullivan

Usually, as I understand it, the agenda item is for the discussion between the board members. Response could be provided in public comment I believe.

Markus Hirt

So that sounds like it's a no currently. Not asking a question with the member of the public. Any other committee members have any input?

Steve Towne

I have nothing for discussion at this moment, but I would entertain it to make a motion that. Based on input. That we do not support this bill as it's currently written. And to make a motion as such. However, I would like to make note of all the concerns that were brought here today. And maybe make a second motion later.

Markus Hirt

Thank you, Mr. Towne Do I hear a second?

Sean Burke

Mr. Chairman, this is Sean Burke. I'll second that motion.

Markus Hirt

Sean, welcome back. OK, going to a vote then.

Carl Bottorf

Can we have some discussion on the motion?

Markus Hirt

Any discussion on the motion, any discussion on the motion?

Carl Bottorf

Yes. So just to clarify what? What is the motion covering? Is it covering the original bill or the amended?

And if it's amended, do we have the right? Do we all have what we need to see, to make a good vote?
What are we voting for and what are we voting against?

Markus Hirt

Mr. Towne, do you want to outline your motion again?

Steve Towne

So, my motion is that we, as an Advisory Board, write a letter, not supporting AB 358 and the movement of the Office of EMS from the Health Division to the Fire Marshal's Office.

Markus Hirt

Sean Burke, are you still maintaining your second on that?

Sean Burke

Mr. Chairman, I still maintain that the second, thank you.

Markus Hirt

Thank you, any other discussion? We'll put it to a vote. Everybody in favor of Mr. Towne's motion say aye.

Sean Burke

Aye

Steve Towne

Aye

Douglas Oxborrow

Aye

Markus Hirt

Aye. Any opposed?

Bodie Golla

Bodie Golla, for the record, opposed.

Markus Hirt

We have five ayes'. One opposed, the motion carries. Are we hearing any other motions?

Steve Towne

Mr. Chair, I would like to make a motion that we that we consolidate all these grievances that we've been brought up with today. Maybe form a working group to bring our fire colleagues and their concerns. Have a working group to work through their concerns and issues because they are significant, they are shared amongst everyone in the state and what our concerns are and how we could better work together to get those concerns addressed and to maybe further discussion on AB 358 in that work group.

Markus Hirt

Mr. Towne that working group, what would it entail? What would the goal be?

Steve Towne

The goal would be to further address the fire chiefs concerns and bring more to light our input on what we would like to see and have our concerns on 358 addressed.

Markus Hirt

Mr. Town are the are those two separate motions? Drafting a letter with all the concerns, and also a second motion creating a working group that would make it cleaner.

Steve Towne

I can make it 2 separate motions. So, I'd like to make the first motion that we that we draft a letter of concern, combining all the concerns that were brought here today as future items for this board to address and second motion would be that we form a working group with the bringing the Fire Chief associations their membership to work on our concerns with AB 358.

Markus Hirt

Mr. Towne's first motion would cover a letter that consolidates all the concerns brought up brought forward today. Do I hear second on that motion?

Brianna Anderson

Hey Marcus. Sorry to interrupt you. It looks like we have a hand up.

Brandon Brady

Brandon Brady, Tahoe Douglas Fire for the record that group already exists, headed by Chief Nichols from North Lyon County. I think somebody referenced it; I was on that as well that group went largely ignored. In fact, it was Bodie that talked about it. That's already been done, it already exists, and it was largely ignored.

Markus Hirt

Mrs. Sullivan, do you have a comment on that?

Bobbie Sullivan

I would encourage that the representative from that group be present at the at the committee, if that's what I'm understanding from Mr. Brady, have a representative from that group. I did have one clarification, Mr. Towne, if I could. So are you amending that original agenda item from the letter of support to combine everything I wasn't sure.

Steve Towne

So, the first motion was the letter that we had already moved on past, correct?

Bobbie Sullivan

Yes, ok, thank you.

Steve Towne

To address Chief Brady's item, that group had worked outside of the purview of the EMS Advisory Board. So, I would like to bridge that gap and have their representatives work with the EMS Advisory Board so that we can better address their concerns. Because up until last week, I had no idea that AB 358 existed.

Bodie Golla

Bodie Golla for the record.

Markus Hirt

Go ahead.

Bodie Golla

Yeah, I was a part of this group with Chief Nichols as the representative from the EMS committee. So, I still echo everything that was just said there. There was no traction on this because we simply got told that NRS and NAC's needed to be changed. Well, if we're not going to build to change these, I mean, another work group is not going to be able to change these regulations that need to be changed to change some of our problems. You know, I'm not opposed to trying another work group, but I'm just simply saying there's a lot of hurdles here and we need to be aware that it's a hurdle.

Markus Hirt

Markus Hirt for the for the record. Of course, NRS can't be changed unless it goes through the legislature. However, we have changed some NAC's, this AB would be a legislative change, but if it comes to changing NAC by itself, we have promoted some change at least. What, for example, EMT's now being able to go directly to paramedic school so NAC's can be changed but NRS's is a legislative process. Of course, that would be something that working group could work on together, collaborate on for the next legislative period which would be into two years. I would second Mr. Towne's motion there to solidify that more and collaborate more. So, let's bring it bring that to a vote. If you would just state your name for the record, please.

Jeremy Loncar

Jeremy Loncar, Storey County, for the record. I just want to kind of bring up a couple things. The way this was agenzed with the discussion and review of the Assembly bill, the most appropriate person that should have been up here talking about this, during that time of discussion was the man that presented it. He was neglected that opportunity to do so, and now we're making a motion on something that was not agenzed. I just do not feel that's appropriate.

Bobbie Sullivan

Mr. Chairman, Bobbie Sullivan, for the record, I believe that we should stick to the itemized agenda and that is to the letter and any other discussion about this can be moved to the next meeting, which is in May.

Steve Towne

I'll withdraw my motions.

Markus Hirt

Motion withdrawn. So, really the only thing that we voted on and agreed on, now is the is the letter itself, that motion carried. And I don't think there is any other motions to entertain. Thank you. Unless there's anything else, I would open it back up to public comment. Let me just read this really quick, action may not be taking on any matter brought up under this agenda item until scheduled on an agenda for a later meeting, so it's open for public comment.

Jason Nichols

Jason Nichols North Lyon Fire Chief. I appreciate the opportunity to be here. I know after having sat on a similar committee for eight years, the job that you have isn't easy. Oftentimes a lot of things get pushed at you that you're unfamiliar with until last week, and that's unfortunate. But rest assured, none of this has been done in the dark. This has been a fully transparent process from the fire chiefs, speaking not for the Fire chiefs, as that is not my responsibility, I can only speak for the representative that was

tasked by the Nevada Fire Chiefs to lead up the work group that worked along with Chief Brady and Chief Golla, and with Mrs. Sullivan on a litany of items that we had issues with the Bureau of EMS. Those meetings went on for four months. And at the 4th and final meeting, we were told in no uncertain terms we were not going to make any of these changes, that ended the meet. We would not be here today, you would not have taken this vote today, this legislative piece would not be here today if the EMS program listened to us. They don't listen, that's why we need to make this change. The change that AB 358 proposes is the first step in creating a more efficient, more responsive, more reactive and a better EMS system, it is that simple. this is the first step. Second, for point of order on the motion, clarification of the motion for your letter, you have agendized that you will send a letter to the committee. That is not the Assembly committee. I just want to make sure that the motion to send that letter to the Committee, because that's how it was agendized, that would be the only thing that would be possible. Second point of order, for you to conduct this meeting without a DAG, is a symptom of the larger problem, is continuing without good guidance. A DAG could have stopped a lot of problems today. I believe that the DAG probably will look at the issues that came up today in the functionality of this meeting and probably have issues with it. Thank you.

Markus Hirt

Thank you. Any other public comment?

Carl Bottorf

Yes, this is Carl Bottorf for the record. I serve as the nurse on the EMS Advisory Council for nurses that are involved with EMS. My role was mischaracterized by the fire chiefs at the committee meeting as being affiliated with my employer, Nellis Air Force Base, which has nothing to do with my role on this committee. I would just ask that in the future, get the facts straight, fire chiefs. Thank you.

Markus Hirt

Thank you, Carl. Any other public comment?

Jeremy Loncar

Jeremy Loncar for the record, I just want to go on the record saying, you know, being in the fire service here for 26 years in the state of Nevada, I've seen the changes, I've seen Nevada EMS and fire evolve and grow through the years. We strongly support this, with Story County. I've worked with, Chief Harvey, Chief Nichols, many of the others around here, but we strongly support this bill because this is part of the greater change. This is the first step, we've addressed budgetary concerns, as long as we've known, there's been budgetary constraints. There's nothing being done and that's the issue, is there's nothing being done. So how do we rectify that? Obviously, we got to put in together a better place for us to do that, a better mechanism and something where the growing service in the state of Nevada is fire- based EMS, we have a little bit more push, we have a little bit more pull. It isn't stealing away from the private, it's that we're used to dealing with these people. That is where the trends are going.

So we are presenting something to fix the problem, it's a mechanism to do so and we just need our foot in the door. But it's also looking after us, as you look at this board and how it's composed today, look at the Washoe and down here in Carson and where the bulk of the fire base EMS is, we don't have that representation. So, we're lacking the voice, but I'll yield to anyone else. Thank you.

Markus Hirt

Thank you very much.

Rich Harvey

Chief Harvey, and two things I really want to say. First off, the way you guys wrote the agenda to target the committee, the bill passed out of that committee on Wednesday with a unanimous vote. 9 Democrats, 4 Republicans. There was a gentleman on here that said numerous amendments, I'm aware of one amendment to that bill as it passed out of there. So good luck sending in a letter to a committee that already passed the bill. Have fun with that one. The second one I want to address is everybody has talked about deaf ears, non-responsiveness, no traction and one of the arguments against our bill is it doesn't have funding in it. It's true, correct. But one of our arguments back to you is that funding has been an issue for umpteen years. What have you done about it? Where's the bill? How much did the legislature cut your budget this year? Did you request new positions? Have you guys done anything to address the problems that we've been pointing out for years? And your guys' excuses? We're understaffed. What was the request for additional staff? Where was the request for us to go help you get that staff right? Part of the reason that we must move it somewhere is we've got to move it over to somebody that will listen and take the actions that people have been talking about for years. You want a budget. We've got a commitment from DPS that will support what they ask for to make this thing work. If you want to make it work, try to make it work somewhere else, cause it's not working here. Thanks.

Markus Hirt

Thank you, Chief Harvey. Any other public comment from anybody on the phone or online?

Bobbie Sullivan

Mr. Chairman, Bobbie Sullivan, for the record, I did want to bring forward that agenda to meet open meeting law, needed to be posted by 9:00 AM Tuesday, so there was no opportunity to adjust the agenda once it had been formally posted for open meeting law.

Markus Hirt

Thank you, Mrs. Sullivan. Last call for any other public comment.

Steve Towne

Steve Towne, Mr. Chairman, if I may. I have great respect for you gentlemen in your departments. You are at the forefront of moving forward and being progressive in the state, my only regret is that this is a really one of the first times I've seen many of you in in this building or on the meetings. I just think it was a big, missed opportunity over these last few years that what we could have accomplished with your direction and participation, like I said, I was unaware whether through the board or through my department that AB 358 was being pushed. So, for me, I did feel like it was created in a vacuum. It was very fire centric, and my department individually or the Advisory Board were included in any of those discussions or conversations.

Markus Hirt

This is Markus Hirt for the record, I can only second what Mr. Towne stated here. I also heard about this very late. We weren't aware, couldn't really prepare for the hearing or the reading last Friday. And I think more collaboration would have really helped to get this more solidified and get our input in that as well. I'm not faulting you guys for pushing something that needs to be fixed. It's funding being one piece and you know some of these issues to be fixed. I don't fault you for that. Do we have any other public comment?

Douglas Oxborrow

I'm one of the newest members of the EMS office, I've been here about two years and have watched the efforts that these guys put in, I'd like to echo your sentiments. I appreciate you guys being here because I haven't seen you in the building before. There are some challenges, EMS recognizes that, and you guys do too. But I've seen the EMS guys work this extremely hard and they're putting in all the efforts that they can. You know, it's process before people. We could use some more staffing, we could use some more funding, I've heard everybody acknowledge that. If this is the solution, great. But, to always point out that there's a challenge without providing a solution, that's called complaining. So, we do need to sit down as an entity, both sides of the table and establish what the challenges are and what the best solutions for those are. This is like a big ship, it's moving, it's carrying cargo and it's doing well. We got some water in the bilges and just changing captains isn't going to fix that. We need to fix the ship itself.

Markus Hirt

Thank you, Mr. Oxborrow. Any other public comment? Can I hear a motion to adjourn?

Steve Towne

Steve Town for the record motion to adjourn.

Carl Bottorf

Second it.

Markus Hirt

Any opposed? I hereby adjourn this meeting. Thank you very much for everybody's participation.