



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
PAT QUINN

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Governor Quinn Signs Legislation to Improve Emergency Response Services in Rural Areas

*New Laws Will Help Improve Emergency Response Times and Quality
Care to People Across Every Corner of Illinois*

SPRINGFIELD – Governor Pat Quinn today visited the Illinois State Fair on Agriculture Day to sign legislation that will help improve emergency response services in rural areas throughout the state. The new laws help ensure the highest quality of care can be provided in ambulances and on the scene of accidents across Illinois. Today's action is part of Governor Quinn's agenda to protect and improve the health and well-being of the people of Illinois.

"These common sense laws take advantage of the advanced emergency medical training that many emergency workers in rural areas already have," Governor Quinn said. "When every second counts and you've got a lot of territory to cover, it's comforting to know that responders in any area of the state can use all of their training in emergencies."

"By signing these bills, Governor Quinn has made Illinois a safer state, and even more lives will be saved," State Representative Don Moffitt (R-Gilson), the House sponsor of both rural emergency response bills, said. "I commend Governor Quinn for making this upgrade in the level of emergency medical care available for the citizens of Illinois."

House Bill 4523, sponsored by Representative Moffitt and State Senator John M. Sullivan (D-Rushville), allows ambulance providers in rural areas to be upgraded to the highest EMT license of any person staffing that ambulance, including registered nurses. This will allow more kinds of life-saving procedures to be performed when an ambulance responds to an emergency.

Under existing law, the ambulance itself is restricted to a set level of emergency care regardless of who is staffing it. Rural Emergency Medical Service (EMS) providers have struggled to properly staff emergency vehicles, and this legislation allows for the addition of a licensed, highly-qualified medical professional to help fill the void. The law is effective Jan. 1, 2015.

"In some rural areas of the state an ambulance ride can last up to an hour," Senator Sullivan said. "It only makes sense to allow nurses certified at a specific level to provide the highest level of care during the ambulance ride."

Governor Quinn also signed House Bill 5828, sponsored by Representative Moffitt and State Senator Chapin Rose (R-Mahomet). Many rural communities do not have an ambulance service, but most are part of a fire protection district. Many volunteer firefighters are also trained as paramedics. This new law will allow those firefighters who are trained as paramedics to use those skills in their roles

as firefighters. This was not allowed under the previous law. HB 5828, which is effective immediately, offers rural areas in Illinois increased access to medical response and care.

“This is part of my continued effort to help rural emergency service responders increase their capabilities to serve the population in some of Illinois' most underserved medical areas,” Senator Rose said. “This capability will better enable our EMS crews to take care of a wider variety of emergencies.”

In addition, Governor Quinn signed Senate Bill 3398, sponsored by State Senator Toi Hutchinson (D-Chicago Heights) and State Representative Elgie Sims, Jr. (D-Chicago), which exempts certain specially-designated vehicles used solely for farming purposes from federal trucking regulations. The Governor signed the bill on Agriculture Day at the Illinois State Fair as part of his commitment to supporting Illinois' agriculture businesses. The law is effective immediately.

Governor Quinn is committed to protecting and improving the health and well-being of the people of Illinois. Earlier this year, Governor Quinn invested \$4 million to help 193 fire departments across the state purchase equipment and other tools necessary to provide effective responses to emergencies. Over the past few years, the Governor signed multiple pieces of legislation to modify a state financing program to assist local fire departments in purchasing fire trucks and ambulances as well as making station upgrades.

In 2010, Governor Quinn signed legislation to ensure the highest quality of emergency medical transportation for people across Illinois who are critically ill. The law establishes minimum standards for ambulance services that provide advanced critical care transportation.

In 2013, Governor Quinn signed legislation to make emergency response systems in Illinois more efficient and effective by developing an Illinois 9-1-1 systems directory to allow calls answered by one system to be easily forwarded to another 9-1-1 system when necessary.

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