

Legislative Priorities

Texas 86th Legislative Session (2019)

Increase & Preserve Funding for the Trauma System

At a time of growing demands on the system, and astronomical population growth, state funding has remained stagnant and is even declining in some cases. Rural and frontier communities already are experiencing a lack of access to timely emergency healthcare. Urban areas have more resources but still struggle to maintain services. If Texas wants to maintain its unique, highly effective trauma and emergency healthcare system, the Legislature must ensure a more adequate, stable funding stream to support Emergency Medical Services, Regional Advisory Councils, designated hospitals and the Emergency Medical Task Force. TETAF will look to accomplish this goal through several initiatives, including:

- **Support Efforts to Find Replacement Funds for the Driver Responsibility Program (DRP)**

The majority of state funding for the trauma and emergency healthcare system is currently generated through the Driver Responsibility Program. Therefore, it would be irresponsible to repeal the DRP without enacting a program to generate comparable funding.

- **Train Bystanders in Bleeding Control**

The state's 22 Trauma Service Area Regional Advisory Councils (RACs) have spearheaded regional efforts to train bystanders in bleeding control through the Stop the Bleed initiative. Funding is needed to continue providing this life-saving training and to place Stop the Bleed kits in publicly accessible locations alongside AED machines.

- **Strengthen RAC Language in Statute & Provide Sufficient Funding**

The role of the Trauma Service Area Regional Advisory Councils has expanded greatly to include regional emergency preparedness, cardiac, stroke, perinatal and injury prevention work. While the state's ask of these entities has increased significantly, funding has decreased and the main funding source for RACs has been eliminated. Permanent replacement funding must be found for the depleted Permanent Tobacco Fund for EMS and Trauma Care (Fund 5046) and the role of RACs must be updated in statute to accurately reflect the responsibilities expected of them by the state.

- **Revitalize Emergency Response System Post-Hurricane Harvey**

The impact of Hurricane Harvey was lessened due to a well-prepared, properly trained emergency response system. Through the RACs, the Emergency Medical Task Force (EMTF) provides a well-coordinated response during large scale incidents, offering rapid professional medical assistance to emergency operation systems. When appropriating Hurricane Harvey funds, the state must replenish depleted resources and ensure that aging infrastructure is replaced so Texas will continue to stand ready for the next emergency.



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