



**NEW BRITAIN FIRE DEPARTMENT  
FIRE CHIEF'S OFFICE**

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*"making New Britain safer"*

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**Written Testimony**

M.O.R.E Mandates Sub-Committee

January 10, 2014

Good morning,

Thank you to Co-chairs of the M.O.R.E. Commission for the opportunity to comment on the EMS Primary Service Area issue.

Municipalities have many responsibilities, the most important being the provision of public safety services to its citizens. In the event that a Primary Service Area (PSA) for ambulance transport services has been assigned, in most instances decades ago, to a non-municipal entity, the town or city still today and into the future, has the responsibility for the public's safety. However, the municipality lacks any role, authority or legal right to determine the mechanism to provide quality, cost-effective EMS services to its residents. How can it be that a basic function of local government be assigned by the State to a private entity without review by the municipality and in perpetuity without any reasonable timeframe of review? Today, all levels of government need flexibility and options to provide needed services. The current PSA system severely restricts the ability of towns and cities to determine the best method of providing EMS services.

This restriction of municipal authority does not occur with any other service. Towns and cities are free to determine how perform all other services in an efficient and effective manner. However, that is not the situation with regard to the delivery of EMS services. The current EMS / PSA system provides for local municipal responsibility without local government control.

This advocacy for this local control in regard to the PSA issue is not desired to perpetuate the status quo in regard to municipal silos. Rather, local control will allow municipalities to gain their rightful authority and thus allow them to begin to collaborate, partner with and even consider merged models of service delivery with other municipalities.

Regional delivery of municipal services is the future. These opportunities for regional efficiency will allow the provision of quality services in a cost effective manner.

Thank you for your consideration.

Thomas G. Ronalter  
Fire Chief