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Issue spotlight: Emergency medical services

Throughout this year's legislative session, state lawmakers spent several hours negotiating legislation easing the process for emergency medical services to be declared an essential service. The Iowa Hospital Association was very pleased that legislators passed a bill addressing this issue.

Early in the session, legislators in the House introduced [House File 562](#), which included most of the provisions the Iowa Hospital Association was advocating for. This bill passed unanimously through the House and stayed in the Senate for the remainder of session.

During the 11th hour of session, an amendment was introduced to the annual standings legislation, [Senate File 615](#), that included language on EMS very similar to HF 562.

The amendment updated the process by:

- Allowing counties and county and city EMS districts to declare EMS an essential service through a vote of the people but without a lengthy petition process.
- Allowing these entities to draw down tax levies through property tax or local income surtax if approved by the vote of the people.
- Establishing a district advisory council to help implement and assess EMS service operations.
- Setting a sunset of the declaration at 15 years for those counties that are not the 11 most-populous counties and 10 years for the most-populous counties.

Finally, the amendment gives Iowa hospitals and medical-care ambulance and nontransport services the ability to provide certification for EMS care providers.

Click [HERE](#) to watch a video summarizing the changes that will take place because of the legislation. Click [HERE](#) to access the slides used in the video. Click [HERE](#) to view a question and answer document on the legislation developed by the Iowa Hospital Association.

How to stay in the know

The Iowa Hospital Association has developed several ways to keep you informed. Stay tuned with Legislative Bulletin, Capitol Update, IHA's Facebook page, Twitter account and LinkedIn account (web addresses are below). IHA also will mobilize hospital advocates through VoterVoice Action Alerts when legislators need to hear about hospital issues. **Advocates can sign up for email or text message VoterVoice Action Alerts at <https://www.ihaonline.org/advocacy/iha-hospital-action-network/>.**

Links to bookmark:

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