



Office of the Medical Director

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PROVIDING GOOD MEDICINE IN BAD PLACES

Date: February 28, 2025

To:

The Honorable Kevin Stitt, Governor of Oklahoma

The Honorable Matt Pinnell, Lieutenant Governor of Oklahoma

The Honorable Charles McCall Speaker of the Oklahoma House of Representatives

The Honorable Lonnie Paxton, President Pro Tempore of the Oklahoma Senate

Keith Reed, Commissioner of Health

Members of the Oklahoma State Board of Health

Subject: Vote of No Confidence in the Leadership of the EMS and Trauma Divisions

Governor Stitt, Lieutenant Governor Pinnell, Speaker McCall, President Pro Tempore Paxton, Commissioner Reed, and Members of the Oklahoma State Board of Health,

On behalf of EMS agency directors across Oklahoma, we write to formally express a **vote of no confidence** in the leadership of the **EMS and Trauma Divisions** within the **Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH)**. The ongoing mismanagement, regulatory failures, and lack of accountability have **jeopardized public safety, compromised emergency medical care, and created unnecessary burdens on EMS agencies** throughout the state.

Despite multiple attempts to engage in meaningful dialogue with OSDH leadership, there remains a persistent pattern of **inaction, inefficiency, and failure to fulfill statutory and regulatory obligations**. The following critical issues demonstrate an alarming lack of competency and oversight:

1. OERSSIRF Grant Mismanagement

The Oklahoma Emergency Response Systems Stabilization and Improvement Revolving Fund (OERSSIRF) grant process has been plagued by **delays, inconsistent communication, and administrative inefficiencies**, preventing agencies from accessing crucial funding for operational stability and patient care improvements.

2. Agency Licensing Failures

Licensing delays for EMS agencies have become routine, leading to operational uncertainty, service disruptions, and increased administrative burdens. These failures **directly impact public safety** by preventing agencies from providing lifesaving care.

3. Medic Licensing Issues

The EMS licensure process for emergency medical responders and paramedics has become **unpredictable, inefficient, and error-prone**. Numerous professionals have received the **wrong license level**, further complicating agency compliance and creating risk for patients. Additionally, recertification processing times have reached unacceptable levels, worsening the **ongoing workforce crisis** in EMS.

4. Lack of Stakeholder Engagement

EMS agencies have been systematically excluded from decision-making processes that directly affect emergency medical services across the state. Leadership has **failed to respond to concerns**, disregarded input from frontline EMS professionals, and ignored **solutions proposed by stakeholders** to address system-wide inefficiencies.

5. General Administrative Failures

Beyond specific issues, the **overall administration** of EMS and trauma oversight lacks strategic vision, urgency, and competence. **Regulatory and procedural mismanagement** has left agencies without clear guidance, causing widespread confusion and inefficiency.

6. Failure to Uphold Statutory and Regulatory Requirements for Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)

Statutory and regulatory mandates require **Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) activities** as part of the **Regional Trauma Advisory Boards (RTABs)**. However, these activities have been **halted without explanation or alternative guidance, putting trauma victims in Oklahoma at risk**. CQI programs are essential for system performance monitoring, data-driven improvements, and patient safety—yet leadership has allowed them to collapse without action.

7. Failure to Approve and Implement Required Psychomotor Examination Processes

The National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT) **requires state oversight and approval** for EMR and EMT **psychomotor examinations**. However, despite **clear requirements** and previous committee discussions, OSDH has **failed to approve or provide guidance** on the psychomotor testing process. This inaction has left training institutions without **a standardized process**, delaying certification for EMS professionals and further exacerbating the workforce shortage.

Call to Action: Immediate Leadership Change is Necessary

The current leadership of the **EMS and Trauma Divisions** has repeatedly demonstrated an **inability or unwillingness to effectively oversee the EMS system in Oklahoma**. Their mismanagement has directly impacted:

- The **stability and effectiveness of EMS agencies**,
- The **ability of professionals to obtain and maintain licensure**,
- The **safety of trauma victims and emergency patients statewide**.

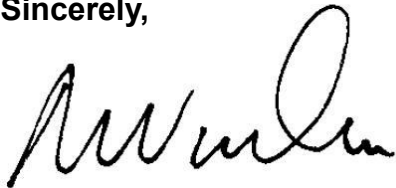
Given the severity of these issues, **we call upon state leadership to take immediate action** to:

1. **Intervene at the highest level** to address systemic failures.
2. **Replace current leadership** with individuals who have the necessary experience, competency, and vision to manage Oklahoma's EMS and trauma systems effectively.
3. **Ensure accountability** by mandating increased transparency, stakeholder engagement, and measurable performance improvements.

We request a formal response from your offices outlining **specific corrective actions and timelines** to address these concerns. The **lives of Oklahomans depend on a functioning and well-managed EMS system**—and immediate leadership intervention is required to restore **trust, stability, and regulatory compliance**.

We appreciate your prompt attention to this matter and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



R. William Worden, D.O., M.Ed.
Medical Director
Heartland Medical Direction

Please see attached signatures of support from EMS leaders from across Oklahoma.

We, the below signed individuals support the attached letter of NO CONFIDENCE

DocuSigned by:
Blake Braden
6A1B49499F3E470...
Heartland Medical Direction - EMRA

Signed by:
Alan Scott Kirby
84A5A9CA1353464...
Johnston County EMS

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LeFlore County EMS

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Greer County EMS & Granite Fire Department

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Brandon Scott
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Hennessey Volunteer Fire Department

Signed by:
Brett Conner
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Luther Fire Department

Signed by:
Brice Minor
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Bridge Creek Fire Protection District

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Bruce Crowel
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Kirks EMS

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Guthrie Fire & EMS

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Alva Fire Department

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Anadarko Fire & EMS

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Cheyenne & Arapahoe EMS

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Tuttle Fire & EMS

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Ray Jennings
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Ray Jennings
Altus Fire & EMS

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Roger Unruh
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Alfalfa County EMS


DocuSigned by:
Ryan Upchurch
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Ryan Upchurch
Altus Fire & EMS

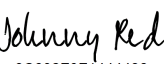
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Valley View Fire Department

DocuSigned by:

Jason Dobson
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Olive Volunteer Fire Department

DocuSigned by:

Jimmy Johnson
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Life EMS

Signed by:

Johnny Red
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Sinor Emergency Medical Service

DocuSigned by:

Joseph Figueroa
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Signed by:

Justin Woodruff
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Erick Ambulance Service

Signed by:


Kacy Wallace
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Signed by:

Kathy Gregory
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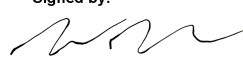
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Michael Moreland
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Michael Nichols
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Community Ambulance Service

Signed by:


Lana Youngblood
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Hickory Hills Fire Department

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Leonard Boeckman
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Sandra Sand
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Signed by:

Seth Brown
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Seth Slaughterback
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