

Procure Ambulance of Maryland, Inc.

January 15, 2021

To the Honorable Senator Paul G. Pinsky, Chair, Senate Education, Health & Environmental Affairs Committee

Re: State Senate bill 67, Emergency Medical Services – Paramedics – Vaccination Administration, by the Chair, Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee (By Request – Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems)

Dear Senator Pinsky:

On behalf of myself and my family, as a mother of five children, business owner providing healthcare in Maryland with offices in Anne Arundel County and Baltimore County, and real estate property owner in both Anne Arundel County and Baltimore City, I am offering support for Senate Bill 67, to permit Paramedic clinicians practicing in the State of Maryland to administer vaccines in accordance with the bill, as potentially modified by MIEMSS' request to include the FDA's Emergency Use Authorized Vaccinations.

As an ambulance transportation service provider, we witness the backlog in emergency rooms, doctors' offices, and clinics every day, which are currently tasked to administer vaccines and provide other care, which backlogs often cause patients to wait hours for vaccines or other care. The alternative often being to forego or delay the administration of a much-needed vaccine. There is also a shortage of RNs who are often typically tasked with administering vaccines. To permit paramedics to administer necessary vaccines such as the flu vaccine, Hep B, as well as the COVID-19 vaccine, would surely lessen the strain on healthcare organizations, such as emergency rooms, urgent care centers, doctor's offices, and clinics.

For the much-needed COVID-19 vaccine, the Maryland Department of Health has provided times for those of our staff of over 200 EMS clinicians wishing to receive the COVID-19 vaccination to become vaccinated. This has enabled our staff to become vaccinated in a timely manner, therefore helping to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and enabling our staff to transport COVID-19 patients safely. As more employees consent to the vaccine, these timeslots will become less available.

We are currently at a peak for employees out of work, sick with COVID-19, which puts a burden on our healthy staff to meet the transport demands of our patients. Transport volumes are higher than ever. Hats off to our regulatory authority, MIEMSS, and the Maryland Department of Health, for facilitating a smooth roll out of this program. We believe that if our paramedics were authorized to administer the vaccine, this would lessen the burden on the Department of Health, thereby freeing up their time to focus on administering the vaccine to the community at large, including all Medical Assistance patients, and enabling our staff to get the vaccine while at their place of work.

Additionally, Procure is an ambulance transportation service provider and approved by MIEMSS to provide Mobile Integrated Healthcare in the homes of our patients, including performing COVID-19 triage home visits to ensure that our COVID-19 positive patients are safe to remain at home. We, and other ambulance transportation service providers, have been asked by insurance companies and health systems including Kaiser Permanente and University of Maryland Capital Region to support their efforts to vaccinate in a timely manner patients desiring to obtain the COVID-19 vaccination.

Currently, my lovely in-laws, Cameron M. Ailiff, Sr. and Jane Ailiff, who have dutifully remained in their homes and protected themselves and others by complying with all recommendations published by the CDC, are awaiting the green light to receive the vaccine from their personal physicians, with no date in sight. At the ages of 75 and 74, respectively, they have not yet received the vaccine. They are unable to see their grandchildren or their siblings. My father-in-law served in the Baltimore County Fire Department for 40 years. Some of my family members, residing in Lothian and Davidsonville, Maryland, are unable to leave their homes due to various health issues. My paramedics could help them receive this vaccine.

We ask that you vote to support Senate bill 67 and ask that you please respond accordingly.

Thank you for your time and consideration!

Sincerely,

Deborah Ailiff, President
Procure Ambulance of Maryland, Inc.
dba Procure Integrated Health and Transport and Procure Home Response