



## **NYSVARA STATEMENT ON WORKFORCE SUSTAINABILITY**

### **September 2020**

**NYSVARA is concerned with recent media stories on potential budget cuts and layoffs impacting EMS agencies across New York State. Now is not the time to reduce the capability of EMS responders to serve our communities.**

**Over the last several months the EMS community has prepared for and faced one of the greatest challenges of our lives. New York State's career and volunteer EMS professionals have been critical to public safety and health, in these uncertain times. We are incredibly proud of the essential work of our colleagues who cared for individuals with COVID-19 and safely maintained necessary EMS services for the ill and injured in their communities. NYSVARA wishes to express our gratitude to front-line EMS responders, as well as our concern and condolences for those responders who were personally impacted by the virus. We honor our colleagues, including the fallen, but also look ahead with the understanding that we must continue to grow the collective ability of EMS to meet the needs of the residents of the State of New York.**

**Our lives continue as communities struggle to define the best path forward. The pandemic will not be over until new transmissions are prevented, but every town, city, and county are seeking to restore as much quality of life, as possible. EMS responders will be there to assist at every turn.**

**The financial burden of the pandemic has fallen squarely on the shoulders of emergency response organizations and local governments. NYSVARA strongly supports the efforts of our members of Congress to bring federal fiscal aid to States and localities. Absent such aid, we know the fiscal pressures will continue to mount.**

**Without federal assistance, local governments will be faced with difficult choices. If budget cuts need to be made, NYSVARA reminds our elected officials that our EMS professionals are critical to the quality of life in our communities every day. It is vital that every effort be made to prevent budget cuts to EMS agencies and layoffs of EMS responders. EMS agencies are already experiencing growing workforce shortages, as detailed in a recent report. (<https://ubmdems.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Download-2019-NYS-EMS-Workforce-Report.pdf>) We need our EMS responders at the ready for the next accident, the next medical emergency, and the next disaster, in every community in the state.**

**Contact:**

**Henry A. Ehrhardt**

**President**

**NYS Volunteer Ambulance & Rescue Association, Inc.**

**President@NYSVARA.org**