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## HOUSE BILL No. 1251

Proposed Changes to January 12, 2026 printing by AM125101

### DIGEST OF PROPOSED AMENDMENT

Emergency ambulance services to unserved areas. Allows a governing body to opt out of the requirement to provide emergency ambulance services to unserved areas in certain cases.

A BILL FOR AN ACT to amend the Indiana Code concerning health.

*Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Indiana:*

1 SECTION 1. IC 16-18-2-150, AS AMENDED BY P.L.197-2011,  
2 SECTION 55, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE  
3 JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 150. (a) "Governing body", for purposes of  
4 IC 16-22-7, has the meaning set forth in IC 16-22-7-2.

5 **(b) "Governing body", for purposes of IC 16-31-5, has the**  
6 **meaning set forth in IC 16-31-5-0.5.**

7 ~~(b)~~ (c) "Governing body", for purposes of IC 16-41-22, has the  
8 meaning set forth in IC 16-41-22-3.

9 SECTION 2. IC 16-31-1-1 IS AMENDED TO READ AS  
10 FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 1. (a) The general  
11 assembly declares that ~~the provision of~~ emergency medical services,  
12 **including emergency ambulance services, are essential services.**  
13 **The provision of emergency medical services** is a matter of vital  
14 concern affecting the public health, safety, and welfare of the people of  
15 Indiana.

16 (b) It is the purpose of this article:

17 (1) to promote the establishment and maintenance of an effective  
18 system of emergency medical service, including the necessary  
19 equipment, personnel, and facilities to ensure that all emergency  
20 patients receive prompt and adequate medical care throughout

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the range of emergency conditions encountered;

(2) that the emergency medical services commission established under IC 16-31-2 shall cooperate with other agencies empowered to license persons engaged in the delivery of health care so as to coordinate the efforts of the commission and other agencies; and

(3) to establish standards and requirements for the furnishing of emergency medical services by persons not licensed or regulated by other appropriate agencies.

SECTION 3. IC 16-31-1-2 IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 2. ~~The provision of~~ Emergency medical ~~service~~ **services, including emergency ambulance services, are essential services. The provision of emergency medical services** is an essential purpose of the political subdivisions of the state.

SECTION 4. IC 16-31-5-0.5 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE AS A NEW SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 0.5. **As used in this chapter, "governing body" means the following:**

(1) **The board of county commissioners, for a county not subject to IC 36-2-3.5 or IC 36-3-1.**

(2) **The county council, for a county subject to IC 36-2-3.5.**

(3) **The city-county council, for a consolidated city or county having a consolidated city.**

(4) **The common council, for a city other than a consolidated city.**

(5) **The town council, for a town.**

(6) **The township executive with the approval of the township board, for a township.**

SECTION 5. IC 16-31-5-1, AS AMENDED BY P.L.170-2022, SECTION 30, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 1. **Except as provided in section 1.5 of this chapter,** the governing body of a city, town, township, or county by the governing body's action or in any combination may do the following:

(1) Establish, operate, and maintain emergency medical services.

(2) Levy taxes under and limited by IC 6-3.6 and expend appropriated funds of the political subdivision to pay the costs and expenses of establishing, operating, maintaining, or contracting for emergency medical services.

(3) Except as provided in section 2 of this chapter, authorize, franchise, or contract for emergency medical services, **including entering into interlocal cooperation agreements under**

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1 **IC 36-1-7. However:**

2 (A) a county may not provide, authorize, or contract for  
3 emergency medical services within the limits of any city  
4 without the consent of the city; and

5 (B) a city or town may not provide, authorize, franchise, or  
6 contract for emergency medical services outside the limits  
7 of the city or town without the approval of the governing  
8 body of the area to be served.

9 (4) Apply for, receive, and accept gifts, bequests, grants-in-aid,  
10 state, federal, and local aid, and other forms of financial  
11 assistance for the support of emergency medical services.

12 (5) Establish and provide for the collection of reasonable fees for  
13 ambulance services the governing body provides under this  
14 chapter.

15 (6) Pay the fees or dues for individual or group membership in  
16 any regularly organized volunteer emergency medical services  
17 association on their own behalf or on behalf of the emergency  
18 medical services personnel serving that unit of government.

19 **SECTION 6. IC 16-31-5-1.5 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA**  
20 **CODE AS A NEW SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS**  
21 **[EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 1.5. (a) Subject to section 1(3) of**  
22 **this chapter, and except as provided in subsection (c), a county**  
23 **governing body shall:**

24 (1) identify areas of the county, if any, that are unserved by  
25 at least one (1) public, private, or nonprofit provider of  
26 emergency ambulance services; and

27 (2) provide emergency ambulance services to the unserved  
28 areas by any of the means set forth in section 1 of this  
29 chapter, including:

30 (A) establishing a county emergency ambulance service;

31 (B) contracting with a public, private, or nonprofit  
32 provider of emergency ambulance services; or

33 (C) entering into interlocal cooperation agreements  
34 under IC 36-1-7 with one (1) or more political  
35 subdivisions.

36 (b) Nothing in this section requires the county to appropriate  
37 county revenue to provide emergency ambulance services, if  
38 emergency ambulance services can be provided by other means.

39 [ (c) A governing body may pass an ordinance to opt out of the  
40 requirements set forth in subsection (a) if, after making every  
41 reasonable effort to comply with the requirements set forth in  
42 subsection (a), the governing body determines that it is unable to

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1 comply with the requirements. The ordinance shall state the  
2 specific reasons for noncompliance. The county shall send a copy  
3 of the ordinance to the department of homeland security.  
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