

# Butte County EMS and the 2018 Camp Fire



A Look at New Legislators and Legislative Publications



### CAA Vision

Assure delivery of excellent pre-hospital care to the people of California by promoting recognized industry best practices.

### CAA Mission

Serve as the voice and resource on behalf of emergency and non-emergency ambulance services to promote effective and fiscally responsible EMS systems and standards.

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Circulation among California's private ambulance providers, elected officials and EMSA administrators.



## President's Message

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**Alan McNany** | *President*

### Changing of the Guard at EMS Commission

**T**he Commission on Emergency Medical Services (EMS) for the State of California was created and became effective January 1, 1981. It is an 18-member body, with one seat reserved for a representative of the CAA. Members are appointed and serve a three-year term. It is an unpaid position.

The Commission reviews and approves regulations, standards, and guidelines developed by the State EMS Authority (EMSA). The Commission also advises EMSA on: emergency medical data systems; the assessment of emergency facilities and services; communications, medical equipment, training personnel, facilities and other components of an EMS system; and recommends on development and future directions of emergency medical services in the State. Further, the Commission serves as an appeal body for local EMS agency systems plans that have been disapproved by EMSA.

Jaison Chand has been the CAA's representative to the Commission since March 11, 2011 – nearly 7 years. Jaison is a paramedic and registered nurse, and he is the operations manager at City Ambulance of Eureka, a company serving Humboldt County for over 45 years. Chand has been a fabulous representative of CAA to the Commission, always looking out for our member's interests. He was diligent at studying the issues, worked tirelessly behind

the scenes to build a working rapport with fellow commissioners, was publicly vocal about issues important to ambulance companies, and voted to protect the interests of the private ambulance industry. While Jaison was a Commissioner, he heard the first-ever appeal of an EMS plan. Thank you Jaison for a job well done!

Speaker of the Assembly Anthony Rendon appointed Todd Valeri to fill Chand's expired term on February 11, 2019. Valeri has 35 years of experience in EMS. He has worked nearly every level including paramedic, and is now the President/CEO at American Ambulance. He employs over 700 people and operates more than 100 ambulances on the ground and in the air, serving Fresno County and Kings County with a full continuum of ambulance services from BLS to Critical Care Air.

Valeri's positions and contributions to the CAA are many and varied. He is a Board Member and Vice President. He is a Legislative Committee Member, CAAPAC Interim Chair, and past member of the Ethics and Professionalism Committee. In addition, he is a founding member and secretary of the 9-1-1 Ambulance Providers' Alliance. His first meeting as a Commissioner will be March 20. We thank Todd Valeri for accepting this appointment to represent the CAA and wish him well. 🌟



## Executive Director's Report



**Ross Elliott** | Executive Director

## 2019 CAA Strategic Plans

One of the key roles for the CAA Board of Directors and committee chairpersons is to collectively develop the CAA's goals for the year. In providing this leadership, a road map of activities and priorities is established to ensure members receive great value for being part of the Association.

The leadership team met for two all-day sessions (Nov. 14 and Jan. 29) to develop the plan. A new approach was taken this year that helps the CAA identify "bite-sized monthly actions" that must occur to achieve multi-year goals. All of the details are still in the works (and probably will be for a while), but this framework sets forth the development of tangible measurements for determining progress in goal attainment.

Using this approach, the Board and committee chairs can closely monitor progress, and members get transparency to see how their dues are being used. We hope there is significant value to our members in achieving this level of transparency.

The key multi-year priorities for the CAA are:

- Grow Membership
- Expand Legislative Credibility and Influence
- Expand Geographic presence of CAA members in the state
- Have productive dialogue with key EMS stakeholder associations

Each of these long-term goals contain within them multiple annual objectives and measurements. The strategic plan framework establishes 3 to 5 year *Break Through Objectives* (see key multi-year priorities, listed above), which is Level 1 of the plan. Further, the plan identifies *Annual Stretch Targets* (Level 2) for each objective. Ideally, achievement of the annual targets will lead to attainment of the *Break Through Objectives*. The plan identifies actions (*Improvement Priorities*, Level 3) the Association must take to attain the *Annual Targets*. Level 4 consists of *Targets to Improve*, which contain very specific targets/activities and dates. Level 5 of the plan identifies all of the people *Resources* available to the CAA and who will be responsible for each *Target to Improve* action item.

One item of continual importance to members is enhancing revenue, such as improving Medi-Cal reimbursement and combating claims denials, etc. Yet, on the surface, the importance of this issue is not immediately clear. Take heed, such objectives are not lost. Rather, they are imbedded within the multi-year goals, such as expanding legislative credibility and influence.

Many of the details in the lower level of the strategic plan are still being developed. But, over time, perhaps the next few weeks, every component will be specifically identified, measured and tracked. Additional information will be shared with members as the details of the plan further emerge. ✨



## Legislative Update



**Chris Micheli** | Legislative Advocate

## Profiles of New Legislators

**W**ith the commencement of the 2019-20 Legislative Session, there are a number of “new faces” in the California Legislature, with a few returning members who had served previously in the Assembly. The following provides summaries of the new legislators based upon their official biographies.

### STATE ASSEMBLY

**8 new Members elected. Partisan composition is now 61 Democrats and 19 Republicans (it was 55D – 25R)**

#### AD 15

**Assembly Member Buffy Wicks** is a community organizer, an advocate for kids, and a grassroots activist with experience at the local, state and federal levels. She was born in a small town in rural California and grew up in a trailer, raised by working class parents who pushed her to work hard and think big. Buffy’s passion is fighting for equity, equal opportunity, and economic security – with a particular focus on policies affecting women and children. She served at the Center for American Progress as a Senior Fellow, where she launched a national policy initiative, with Planned Parenthood and SEIU, fighting for economic security for women and families. Currently, Buffy is leading a statewide campaign to empower parents to advocate for better opportunities for their kids. Buffy lives in Oakland with her husband Peter and her 21-month old daughter, Josephine.

**Buffy Wicks (D) defeated Jovanka Beckles (D); Incumbent Tony Thurmond (D) successfully ran for Superintendent of Public Instruction [seat remains Democrat]**

#### AD 16

**Assembly Member Rebecca Bauer-Kahan** is an accomplished attorney, environmental advocate, community volunteer, law professor, and mother. A Bay Area native, she has dedicated her career and personal time to improving her community, solving complex problems, protecting civil rights, and fighting to ensure everyone has the opportunity to succeed. As an attorney, Rebecca specialized in ensuring major corporations complied with environmental laws and regulations by leading internal investigations to improve their environmental practices, while maintaining profitability. Simultaneously, she worked with government agencies and elected officials to address their concerns. She also worked with major tech companies on intellectual property cases, involving topics including copyright, trademark and trade secret theft. For the last seven years, Rebecca has taught appellate law and legal research and writing at Santa Clara University and Golden Gate University. She is a product of public schools and is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and Georgetown University Law Center.

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# Legislative Update

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**Rebecca Bauer-Kahan (D) defeated Catherine Baker (R) – Incumbent [seat changed from Republican to Democrat]**

**AD 30**

**Assembly Member Robert Rivas** lives in Hollister with his wife, Christen, and their one-year-old daughter, Melina. He served on the San Benito County Board of Supervisors from 2010-18, and most recently served a term as Chairman. During his service on the Board of Supervisors, Robert fought to create more affordable housing and worked with the business community to bring jobs to San Benito County. He led efforts to repair local roads and reduce traffic congestion, and to build a flagship county library and a new county courthouse. He led contract negotiations with local firefighters to reduce costs and expand access for rural residents. He's stood up for transparency on the board. And he's become known for his fierce advocacy on behalf of the environment. While serving as Supervisor, Robert stayed active in the community. He is a professor at Gavilan College, where he teaches a political science course. He's served as an employment specialist and job training coordinator at San Benito High School, helping students prepare for their first jobs.

**Robert Rivas (D) defeated Neil Kitchens (R); Incumbent Assemblywoman Anna Caballero (D) was termed out and**

**successfully ran for State Senate [seat remains Democrat]**

**AD 38**

**Assembly Member Christy Smith**, a 36-year resident of Santa Clarita and a dedicated public servant, understands the unique issues facing the 38th Assembly District. She served her second term as a Governing Board Member of the highly successful Newhall School District. Christy returned to California with her husband to raise their family. While raising their two daughters, Christy has been very active in local education, serving as a PTA and site council member before being elected to the Newhall School Board in 2009. Christy understands that education is the key to prosperity for citizens and businesses alike. In addition to her activism for local education, she is an education advocate statewide, having served as the Legislative Vice President of the Santa Clarita Valley Trustees Association and as a delegate to the California School Board Association.

**Christy Smith (D) defeated Dante Acosta (R) – Incumbent [seat changed from Republican to Democrat]**

**AD 40**

**Assembly Member James Ramos** served as a Supervisor of San Bernardino County from 2012-18. In 2015, he was

unanimously elected by his colleagues to serve as Board Chairman. Ramos was the first Native American to be elected to the Board of Supervisors, as well as to the San Bernardino Community College Board of Trustees, on which he served from 2005-12. Ramos is also the immediate past Chairman of the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, with a deep commitment to the preservation of California Indian culture. He is co-founder of the San Manuel Band's Cultural Awareness Program, and serves as director of the California Indian Cultural Awareness Conference held annually at California State University, San Bernardino. Ramos served the Inland Empire in government leadership roles on State and Local Boards and Commissions. James and Terri, his wife of 29 years, are the proud parents of four children and three grandchildren.

**James Ramos (D) defeated Henry Nickel (R); Incumbent Marc Steinorth (R) ran unsuccessfully for the board of supervisors [seat changed from Republican to Democrat]**

**AD 72**

**Assembly Member Tyler Diep** began his public service in 2005, working for the California State Assembly. In that position, Tyler had the opportunity to assist

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The California Ambulance Association is now welcoming non-members to subscribe to the *Siren* magazine. Published quarterly, the *Siren* is a comprehensive source of information on issues that are important to the ambulance industry. Contents include feature articles, association educational and networking events, legislative updates and analysis, member news and much more.



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## Legislative Update

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people with state-related services. In his full-time job, Tyler was an Outreach Service Specialist for the California State Board of Equalization. In this role, Tyler worked closely with agencies like the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Franchise Tax Board (FTB), and Employment Development Department (EDD) to ensure that small business owners have a basic understanding of tax laws. Tyler earned his Bachelor's Degree in Public Administration from California State University, San Diego. In 2012, the California State Senate issued a Resolution of Recognition to honor Tyler Diep for his service to the people of Westminster.

**Tyler Diep (R) defeated Josh Lowenthal (D); Incumbent Assemblyman Travis Allen (R) ran unsuccessfully for governor [seat remains Republican]**

### AD 74

**Assembly Member Cottie Petrie-Norris** is a business and community leader, a wife and a mother. She cares deeply about the future of her children and all of our children – and in the State Assembly, she will work to support and protect our community. After college, she enjoyed a 20-year career in finance, marketing, and technology. She has built businesses and led teams at Fortune 500 corporations, small companies, and start-ups. In the business world, she demonstrated her ability to tackle tough problems with strategic vision and pragmatic action. She lived and worked in Washington DC, South Africa, London and – for the past 5 years – back in Southern California. She lives in Laguna Beach with her family – husband Colin, two sons Dylan & Hayden, and rescue dog, Flounder.

**Cottie Petrie-Norris (D) defeated Matthew Harper (R) – Incumbent [seat changed from Republican to Democrat]**

### AD 76

**Assembly Member Tasha Boerner Horvath** is a third generation Encinitan, Encinitas Council Member, businesswoman, community leader, and a mother. Tasha

serves on a number of local boards and committees as well as regionally on the San Diego Association of Government's Border Committee. Tasha is also a member of the League of California Cities Housing, Community and Economic Development Policy Committee. Tasha's professional experience in Marketing Communications focuses on tackling tough problems with strategic vision and pragmatic action for non-profits, small businesses, global Fortune 500 companies, and higher education institutions. While living in Europe for 12 years, Tasha met her husband and they had two children. They are a bilingual family and speak German and English at home. Tasha earned an A.B.D. in Political Science and a M.A. in International Studies from Claremont Graduate University Institute of Politics and Policy. Part of Tasha's graduate work was done at Humboldt University of Berlin. She received her B.A. in Political Science from the University of California.

**Tasha Boerner Horvath (D) defeated Elizabeth Warren (D); Incumbent Assemblyman Rocky Chavez (R) ran unsuccessfully for Congress [seat changed from Republican to Democrat]**

### STATE SENATE

**9 new Members (although 4 previously served in the Assembly). Partisan composition is now 29 Democrats and 11 Republicans (it was 26D – 14R)**

### SD 8

**Senator Andres Borgeas** is a proud husband, father, and was a Fresno County Supervisor, serving the communities of Fresno and Clovis. He previously served on the Fresno City Council. Andreas arrived in the Central Valley as a Georgetown Law School graduate and Fulbright Scholar who was a product of Phoenix public schools and a Boy Scout. The opportunity to serve as a judicial clerk for Federal Judge Oliver Wanger offered Andreas the chance to work on complex water issues. A chance encounter at Starbucks in 2002 led

to Andreas meeting his future wife, Anna Hadjinlian. Anna would become the COO of the Fresno Area Chamber of Commerce and Andreas a professor of international security law at the San Joaquin College of Law. During his time serving the City and County of Fresno, Andreas and Anna welcomed two handsome, rambunctious boys: Aleko and Aris. They are incredibly active in the Greek and Armenian communities.

**Andreas Borgeas (R) defeated Paulina Miranda (D); Incumbent Senator Tom Berryhill (R) was termed out [seat remains Republican]**

### SD 12

**Senator Anna M. Caballero** has a 30-year legacy of public service in her community. She received her undergraduate degree from UC San Diego, and her law degree from UCLA. After graduating law school, she moved to Salinas to provide legal services to farmworkers. Along with her partners, Anna made the commitment to open an office in Salinas and Hollister to provide legal services to working families at a reasonable price. She became the first female Mayor of Salinas in 1998. Anna was first elected to the State Assembly in 2006, where she continued to focus on meeting the needs of local residents. From 2010 to 2016, Anna joined Governor Edmund G. Brown's Cabinet as Secretary of the Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency. Anna's leadership has inspired generations of young leaders to work hard, and help build a strong community for the future. She has been a tireless advocate for families, farmers, veterans, workers, the disabled, seniors, and teachers.

**Assemblywoman Anna Caballero (D) defeated Supervisor Rob Poythress (R); Incumbent Senator Anthony Cannella (R) was termed out [seat changed from Republican to Democrat]**

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## Legislative Update

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### SD 14

**Senator Melissa Hurtado** grew up in the Valley. As the daughter of immigrant parents and the first in her family to graduate from college, Melissa knows firsthand what it means to achieve the American dream. As a healthcare advocate, Melissa works to protect Medicare, Medi-Cal and health insurance for children (CHIP). For Melissa, the chance for a good education opened the door for opportunity and a college degree. In her work for the Fresno Teachers Association, Melissa helped ensure that our teachers had the resources to provide our children with the best education possible. As a Councilmember, she supported the Clean Dream Act to protect DACA students and provide pathways to citizenship. On the Sanger City Council, she saved and created high-wage jobs, balanced the budget and built a reserve, all without raising taxes. Melissa will work to bring new businesses and industry to the Valley and diversify the local economy.

**Melissa Hurtado (D) defeated Andy Vidak (R) – Incumbent [seat changed from Republican to Democrat]**

### SD 16

**Senator Shannon Grove** was raised by her single mom in Arvin. After graduating from Arvin High School, she joined the United States Army and served at Headquarters Company 5<sup>th</sup> Corps in Frankfurt, Germany. She personally witnessed the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 as the Soviet Union fell apart, an experience that only increased her love for her country and her commitment to protect our constitutionally guaranteed freedoms. After finishing her Army service, Shannon returned to Bakersfield. In 1993, she started an employment agency with her sister-in-law called Continental Labor Staffing Resources, with a focus on serving the energy and food production industries. Shannon was the first woman veteran elected to the Assembly and was overwhelmingly re-elected twice. Shannon and her husband, Rick, are the

proud parents of 5 grown children and 6 grandchildren.

**Former Assemblywoman Shannon Grove (R) defeated Ruth Musser-Lopez (R); Incumbent Senator Jean Fuller (R) was termed out [seat remains Republican]**

### SD 22

**Senator Susan Rubio** was born in Juarez, Mexico and is the daughter of immigrant parents. Her father came to the United States through the Bracero program in Texas. Susan's upbringing and personal family experiences taught her the importance of hard work and determination. Susan is the product of public schools. She worked as a bookkeeper doing payroll and taxes for a private company while putting herself through college. She attended Azusa Pacific University where she earned a Master's Degree in Education and Multiple Subject Teaching Credential. After graduating, she began her 17-year teaching career and was a fourth-grade teacher with the Monrovia Unified School District. Susan was first elected to represent the City of Baldwin Park as the elected City Clerk, where she focused on providing transparency and protecting democracy for residents.

**Susan Rubio (D) defeated former Assemblyman Mike Eng (D); Incumbent Senator Dr. Ed Hernandez (D) was termed out and ran unsuccessfully for Lt. Governor [seat remains Democrat]**

### SD 24

**Senator María Elena Durazo** is widely regarded as one of the most powerful and savvy union organizers in the United States. On May 15, 2006 she was elected to serve as the Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO, an organization which represents more than 800,000 workers through more than 300 separate unions. While working as a union organizer, she pursued an education in law at the People's College of Law and earned her degree in 1985. Besides her union work, María Elena has served on many civic commissions and

boards. María Elena was married to the late union leader Miguel Contreras, who served as Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the Los Angeles Federation of Labor from 1996 until his untimely death on May 6, 2005. She has two children with Miguel Contreras, Mario and Michael Contreras.

**Maria Elena Durazo (D) defeated Peter Choi (D); Incumbent Senator Kevin de Leon (D) was termed out and ran unsuccessfully for U.S. Senate [seat remains Democrat]**

### SD 32

**Senator Bob Archuleta** grew up in the neighborhood of Lincoln Heights, near Chinatown in Los Angeles, and started working as a young boy selling flowers, tossing newspapers and cleaning any backyard. He enlisted in the United States Army and served in the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division and became a proud paratrooper. And over the years, he passed on the tradition of service to his three sons and two daughters. They all have been very involved in their communities as well. He asked to run for the City Council in Pico Rivera and was first elected in 2007 and served as mayor. His father, Harold, was a warehouse union member, and he was also a union member. He is married to his wonderful wife, Rose, and have five children, with two sons who have graduated from West Point and are currently serving in the military on active duty.

**Bob Archuleta (D) defeated Rita Topalian (R); former Senator Tony Mendoza (D) resigned the seat [seat remains Democrat]**

### SD 34

**Senator Tom Umberg** is a retired U.S. Army Colonel. He began his military service at the Korean DMZ and served three overseas tours. Umberg was recalled to active military duty in 2009-10 to lead

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## Legislative Update

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the U.S. military effort to attack corruption within the Afghan Army and Police, for which he was awarded a Bronze Star for meritorious service in a combat zone. Appointed by President Bill Clinton, Tom served as Deputy Drug Czar, where he was responsible for foreign drug interdiction, counter-drug intelligence and international drug policy. Serving three terms in the State Assembly, Umberg represented central Orange County. Tom repeatedly won the Legislator of the Year award for his effectiveness at working across party lines to get things done. Tom and Robin Umberg have been married for 37 years with three grown children and one granddaughter. Robin is a Brigadier General (Retired) who served as an Army nurse and hospital administrator, as well as Undersecretary of California's Department of Veterans Affairs.

**Former Assemblyman Tom Umberg (D) defeated Senator Janet Nguyen**

**(R) – Incumbent [seat changed from Republican to Democrat]**

### SD 38

**Senator Brian Jones** was an elected Santee Councilmember, Brian put conservative ideas into practice and he decided to run for the State Assembly. He was elected in November 2010. During his six years in the State Assembly, Brian received lifetime "A" ratings from the American Conservative Union, the National Federation of Independent Business, Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association and the California Taxpayers Association. In addition, Brian was named as Outstanding Legislator for 2016 by the California Rifle & Pistol Association for his support of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment. Brian has been a resident of the 38th Senate District since 1978. He attended Santee Elementary, Cajon Park Jr. High, and Santana High

School. After graduating, Brian attended San Diego State University where he earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration. He and his wife, Heather, both grew up in Santee, chose to begin their family there and have lived in the same community ever since. In his spare time, Brian enjoys mountain biking, off-roading, swimming, and spending time with Heather and his three children.

**Former Assemblyman Brian Jones (R) defeated Jeff Griffith (D); Incumbent Senator Joel Anderson (R) was termed out and ran unsuccessfully for BOE [seat remains Republican] \***

*Chris Micheli is an attorney and legislative advocate for the Sacramento governmental relations firm of Aprea & Micheli, Inc.*



## CAA Membership is a Business Essential

The business environment, the healthcare sector and the EMS industry are evolving at an ever-increasing pace. At the CAA we are dedicated to providing members with the essential tools, information, resources, and solutions to help your organization grow and prosper. And, the CAA's collective efforts on statewide legislative and regulatory issues are not possible without strong membership support and engagement.

### Take your place in California's statewide ambulance leadership

Membership not only saves you money on CAA events and resources, but also keeps you up to date on trends, innovations, and regulatory changes through:

- Leadership on statewide legislative and regulatory issues
- Targeted conferences & educational programs
- Member-only updates and alerts
- Member-only discounts & access to expert resources
- Opportunities to exchange ideas with your colleagues statewide



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## Member News

# All Members Encouraged to Be Involved at Upcoming Stars of Life Celebration and Legislative Summit

**Ross Elliott** | CAA Executive Director



**T**he CAA's Annual Stars of Life Celebration is the most exciting statewide event that recognizes and honors the dedicated professionals in the ambulance services industry.

The event is just around the corner. A promotional brochure has been distributed via email and is also available on the CAA website. The online registration process is up and running. This year's event is April 22 and 23; registration deadline is April 8.

We encourage every ambulance company in the CAA to nominate at least one person from its organization to be a Star of Life. This event is one of two signature CAA events for the year, and every member's participation is important. In-person participation and engagement is one of the best ways to maintain the vitality and success of the Association. We urge every ambulance company to be involved with the CAA Stars of Life Celebration and Legislative Summit.

Additionally, sponsoring one or more of your employees to be a Star of Life provides us, collectively, a tremendous platform to educate our elected officials about our many entrepreneurial solutions to public policy challenges. Companies that participate create wonderful memories for their employees, which makes them feel valued and respected. Plus, it gives your company precious local exposure and recognition for your ambulance operation.

Many may think that Stars of Life awards are limited to those few instances each year that involve acts of heroism and bravery, or extraordinary lifesaving incidents. These are of course valid reasons for recognition, but they not the only justification for bestowing Star of Life. Each company is responsible for its own selection process.

Any employee from your organization who epitomizes the spirit and commitment of a quality ambulance service: EMTs, paramedics, dispatchers, customer service

representatives or other operations and support personnel (living or deceased) are appropriate candidates as Stars of Life. Candidates are often selected because they were: the employee of the year; set a new or significant company record; made significant community contributions, such as volunteer work; made significant community contributions related to ambulance, public safety, public health or health care services; has a consistent service record which exemplifies your ambulance operation's mission; provides local leadership in developing community partnerships which enhance homeland security; and other criteria important to individual ambulance companies.

We strongly encourage every ambulance company to nominate at least one employee to be a Star of Life. It is worth the effort. Join us in Sacramento on April 22 and 23! 🌟





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## Feature Article

# Authorizing Community Paramedics – Is This the Year?

Ross Elliott | CAA Executive Director

**F**ive bills have been debated by the California Legislature over the past two years which would permanently authorize community paramedic services. So far, none of these bills have been signed into law. This article examines each of the failed proposals and offers suggestions on what a successful community paramedic bill might look like.

### CAA's interest in Community Paramedicine

Conceptually, community paramedic services offer EMS providers the opportunity to enhance the range of services typically delivered by pre-hospital personnel. By enhancing the range, patients may be better and more efficiently served, EMS costs can be reduced, in some cases new revenue opportunities may be created, the overall cost of healthcare can be reduced, and patients experience better outcomes. With all of these wonderful advantages, one would think that no one would be opposed to such a concept. Wrong. A great deal of opposition has surfaced; getting the legislature to approve and the Governor to sign a bill to permanently authorize community paramedic services has been a unique challenge.

Several community paramedic pilot projects were initiated in California in 2014 under the auspices of EMSA and California's Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD) to determine if the concept might be viable in California. The California Health Care Foundation funded the pilot program administration and paid for the independent evaluation services, which were performed by UC San Francisco.

Three CAA-member companies participated in the initial pilot projects: Medic Ambulance (Solano) post-discharge services; Butte County EMS (Chico) post-discharge services; and Lifeline Medical Transport (Ventura County) public health collaboration. American Ambulance (Fresno/Kings), and King-American Ambulance (San Francisco) have joined the pilot projects recently to evaluate alternate destination programs.

The CAA took a leadership role in championing authorizing legislation to support our member companies participating in the pilot projects and to provide service enhancement opportunities for all ambulance companies statewide. As of October 2018, there have been 4,304 patients enrolled in the pilot projects. Of these, 3,171 (73.7%) of the patients in the pilot projects have been served by private ambulance companies. In comparison, public agencies have served a smaller percentage of the patients (28.4%) in the pilot projects. The lion's share of the work, commitment, and expense at proving the CP concept has been performed by private ambulance companies.

### 2017

**AB 1650 (Maienschein)**, and co-authored by Assembly Members Chavez and Mathis and Senator Wilk, was introduced on February 17, 2017. The CAA sponsored this bill. This bill sought to gain permanent authorization of CP services that were tested and proven in the pilot projects, except the alternate destination concept. Alternate destination proved to be politically problematic; the greatest amount and

most virulent opposition arose because of alternate destinations. Consequently, CAA's AB 1650 was amended early in the process to drop alternate destinations; we calculated that the bill had the greatest chance for success without that service component.

After three referrals to Assembly Health Committee, AB 1650 was eventually heard by the Committee on April 17, 2017. The bill barely passed. Assembly Member Maienschein and our legislative advocate Chris Micheli worked furiously behind the scenes and into the evening to get the votes to move the bill forward. The politically powerful California Nurses Association opposed the bill, and gaining sufficient votes to pass the Committee was difficult.

AB 1650 advanced to the Assembly Appropriations Committee in May 26, 2017. Maienschein learned that there were insufficient votes on the Appropriations Committee to win, so he canceled his request for a hearing. The bill died at committee.

Most of the EMS stakeholder groups that often share common interests with the CAA sat on the sidelines for the debate. The California Hospital Association (CHA) was the only other prominent EMS stakeholder to file a position of support. Unfortunately, those organizations that might potentially benefit from the bill (EMSAAC, EMDAC, Cal Chiefs, and CPF) either silently watched AB 1650 die or acted too late in the legislative process to make a difference. The lack of timely broad-based EMS stakeholder

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## Feature Article

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support for AB 1650 undoubtedly played a key role in this bill's failure.

**AB 820 (Gipson)**, was introduced February 15, 2017. This bill was sponsored by Los Angeles County and California Hospital Association. This bill sought to gain permanent authorization of CP alternate destination concepts that were tested and proven in the pilot projects.

As mentioned, the alternate destination concept carries with it a great deal of political opposition. Despite its proven value to the patient, the interests of emergency physicians (CalACEP) in maintaining the status quo and the perceived threat to nurses (CNA) scope of practice doomed this bill. Assembly Member Gipson proclaimed AB 820 to be a two-year bill, so that he could try bringing groups together and advancing some form of legislation to authorize the concept. In January 2018 the bill was to be heard by Assembly Health Committee, but Gipson canceled the hearing with the realization that he lacked the votes to advance the bill. AB 820 died.

### 2018

Two new bills were introduced at the beginning of the second year of the legislative session to authorize CP services – AB 1795 and SB 944.

**AB 1795 (Gipson)** and co-authored by several others, was a bill to authorize ambulance alternate destinations for behavioral health issues and to sobering centers, with destination decisions to be made by specially trained paramedics. This bill would have established a separate category of paramedic, in addition to a community paramedic. It was introduced on January 9, 2018. AB 1795 was approved by Assembly Health Committee in April 2018, but the bill failed to gain approval by Assembly Appropriations and died in May 2018.

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## Feature Article

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**SB 944 (Hertzberg)** was a California Professional Firefighters (CPF) sponsored bill, and it was introduced on January 29, 2018. This bill proposed to authorize CP services. However, the bill contained a number of other proposals that had no real relevance to CP services. Rather, SB 944 contained many objectionable and toxic provisions to amass power for fire/labor interests over statewide and local EMS systems.

One of the “power grab” provisions in the bill mandated LEMSAs give public agencies the right-of-first-refusal to provide CP services. In other words, if a public agency wanted to provide CP services, the private ambulance company is completely cut-out of the process and banned from the opportunity. Given the fact that private ambulance companies had performed the lion’s share (74%) in proving the CP concept in California as viable through the pilot projects, losing the ability to actually perform the services on a permanent basis made this bill particularly immoral, unfair, and unacceptable.

Further, SB 944 contained provisions that required each county to form an Emergency Medical Care Committee (EMCC), and such a committee would be required to appoint members whose interests leaned towards fire and labor. At the statewide level, the EMS Commission would have been reconstituted to stack the body with members that leaned towards fire and labor interests. The blatant power grab by CPF to control EMS policy at the local and state level made SB 944 particularly objectionable to many EMS stakeholder groups. Under the provisions of SB 944, the private ambulance industry was not even given a voice or vote on EMCC’s or EMS Commission; the bill proposed to strip away any ability by private ambulance industry to be part of the EMS policy decision making process.

Lastly, SB 944 proposed to insert provisions into the Health and Safety Code that would

have altered the meaning and long-standing provisions regarding ambulance exclusivity (1797.224) and giving cities greater autonomy (1797.201) in the local EMS system. Neither of these provisions have any actual relevance to authorizing CP services or enhancing patient care; this was simply a bold power grab by a special interest group.



Despite significant opposition by nearly every EMS stakeholder group, except fire, SB 944 sailed through the legislative process seemingly flying over every hurdle and gaining approval after approval: Sen Health, Sen Judiciary, twice at Sen Appropriations, Senate Floor, and Asm Health. The CAA and other groups mounted a full-out, active opposition campaign. Many CAA members wrote letters in opposition and otherwise

contacted their state legislators to request SB 944 be stopped. On August 16, 2018 just 15 days before the end of the legislative session, SB 944 was killed by the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

After the death of SB 944, the legislature soon thereafter gutted and amended AB 3115 (Gipson). AB 3115 was originally a bill that would have restored voting rights for ex-cons. But, seven days before the end of the legislative session (August 24, 2018), AB 3115 became a bill to authorize CP services and alternate destinations. The contents of SB 944 and AB 1795 were essentially combined and inserted into AB 3115. All of the awful, toxic, immoral provisions contained in SB 944 were resurrected and now contained in AB 3115.

We believed the fight against the “power grab” was over. Yet, with just one week left in the legislative session, the fight was renewed. This move to gut and amend a bill at the last minute, and bypass all scrutiny by committees in both the Assembly and the Senate demonstrates the power that CPF and labor have in the California legislature. AB 3115 went to a floor vote at the Senate and was approved with 27 ayes to 7 nays vote. The floor vote in the Assembly was 57 ayes to 17 nays. In one week AB 3115 was approved by the legislature and the bill was headed to Governor Brown for signature.

On the last possible day for the Governor to make a decision, September 30, 2018, Governor Brown vetoed AB 3115. Without that veto, community paramedic services would have been authorized, but the private ambulance industry would have been entirely marginalized in its ability to affect EMS policy and to participate in CP services. Thank goodness for Governor Brown’s action.

Brown noted in his veto message, “*While this bill has the good intention of making the pilot project permanent, it restricts the types of*

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*facilities to which patients can be transported. It also limits the discretion of local government to design and manage their projects in the way they think best. I support these innovative local efforts and believe they should be expanded but without the restrictions contained in this bill..."*

### 2019

Unfortunately, Governor Brown reached the end of his term in 2018. Since he is no longer in office he will be unable to ensure future CP legislation will be better than last year's proposals. It is unknown the position Governor Gavin Newsom may take on legislation in 2019 or if he shares the same viewpoint as former Governor Brown on this issue.

A representative of the California Fire Chiefs Association (CalChiefs) boasted at a public meeting in Solano County on December 13, 2018 that Governor Newsom is politically beholden to CalChiefs' and other Fire interests. Whether this assertion is true or not remains to be seen. But, in any regard it is incumbent upon the CAA and other EMS system stakeholders to continue vigilance over proposed legislation. The need for vigilance is critical as evidenced by AB 1544.

**AB 1544** (*Gipson and Gloria, co-author Sen Hertzberg*) was introduced February 22, 2019. AB 1544 appears to be nearly a mirror image of the awful, immoral, self-serving, CPF power grab that last year's AB 3115 was.

AB 1544 once again proposes:

- To stack the EMS Commission with fire and labor interest votes
- Mandates implementation of an EMCC at the county level
- Creates two new specialty certification categories for paramedics: community paramedic and triage paramedic, adding unnecessary complexity to the licensure process

- Entirely omits mention of the private ambulance industry as being allowed membership or participation in new advisory boards or committees established to oversee regulation development or operations; we get no seat at the table – no voice, no vote
- Prohibits the inclusion of community paramedic or alternate destination services in the contracts of exclusive ambulance providers; and
- Gives the right-of-first-refusal to public agencies, to totally exclude or restrict the private ambulance industry's participation in CP services.

### The Ideal Bill for CP Authorization

Clearly, given the slanted nature of AB 1544 as introduced, CPF must believe that Governor Newsom will carry their water and disregard former Governor Brown's counsel on this issue. Let's hope they are wrong. Further, let's hope that the 2019/2020 legislators diligently and meticulously evaluate bills to authorize CP services and ensure that bills will only be advanced that improve the lives of Californians and provides fair opportunities for all EMS system stakeholders.

A legitimate bill to authorize CP service should be balanced and not place interests of one EMS stakeholder group over another. Such a bill should pertain strictly to the topic of authorizing community paramedicine and alternate destinations; it should not contain irrelevant mandates to change the balance of power on the EMS Commission or require establishing EMCCs. Additionally, including references to H&S Code 1797.224 and 1791.201 is ridiculous; these are attempts to address other issues and gain power under the guise of CP authorization. Such inclusions are disingenuous and dishonest.

A viable CP authorization bill will be simple. It is unnecessary to create two

new paramedic certifications (community paramedic and triage paramedic). Making the licensure process more complex does not benefit anyone.

Private ambulance providers play a large and essential role in the EMS system. Not only has the private ambulance industry been invaluable at proving the CP concept in California, private ambulance companies care for, treat, and transport 82% of California's EMS patients every year. In comparison, public/fire agencies are a small player in patient transport. Consequently, it is short-sighted and foolish to exclude private ambulance companies from delivering CP services and from being part of the conversation in developing policies and regulations. Those that perform and deliver the vast majority of patient care services in EMS must be heard and must have a say in developing regulations and policies.

Lastly, giving any one EMS service provider the "right-of-first-refusal" to perform new services puts the public at risk. The public deserves to be cared for by the BEST service provider, based on its history and quality of service, as determined by the local EMS agency. Giving public agencies/fire department preferential treatment based solely on the fact that they are public agencies will result in short-changing the general public/patient. Community paramedic and alternate destination services must be delivered by those entities that will provide the BEST service. Any other criteria is nonsense and potentially dangerous.

The people of California deserve to enjoy the benefits and advantages that community paramedic and alternate destination programs will bring. Further, all EMS system stakeholders, including private ambulance companies, deserve a fair opportunity to provide such services. Bills that go beyond these basic principles, like AB 1544, which include extraneous and irrelevant provisions are harmful to local EMS systems and do not best serve Californians. 🌸



## Feature Article

# Top 10 Laws and Regulations for 2019



**Alex Dantzig, CLCS, CAWC**  
Heffernan Insurance Brokers

Every year comes with new laws and regulations that affect employers. It pays to stay on top of all the new requirements, so we are here to help you understand those that are most likely to affect your business. The following are the top 10 laws, regulations and trends that you need to know about going into 2019.

### 1. SEXUAL HARASSMENT TRAINING

Since 2005, California law has required employers having 50 or more employees to provide at least two hours of sexual harassment training to supervisors every two years. SB 1343 changes this by requiring employers with five or more employees to provide non-supervisory employees with at least one hour by Jan. 1, 2020.

In addition, this training must be held every two years. Employers with five or more workers must provide (or continue to provide) two hours of the biennial supervisory training, as well.

### 2. DATA PRIVACY

Companies that collect data on their customers online should start gearing up in 2019 for the Jan. 1, 2020 implementation of the California Consumer Privacy Act of 2018, which is the state's version of the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation.

The law gives consumers the following rights in relation to their personal information:

- The right to know, through a general privacy policy and with more specifics available upon request, what personal information a business has collected about them, where it was sourced from, what it is being used for, whether it is being disclosed or sold, and to whom it is being disclosed or sold;
- The right to “opt out” of allowing a business to sell their personal information to third parties;
- The right to have a business delete their personal information; and
- Not be discriminated against by opting out.

The law applies to businesses that:

- Have annual gross revenues in excess of \$25 million,
- Annually buy, receive for their own commercial purposes, or sell or share for commercial purposes, the personal information of 50,000 or more consumers, households or devices, and/or
- Derive 50% or more of their annual revenues from selling consumers' personal information.

### 3. INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS

While this legal development happened in 2018, now is a good time to go over it.

In May, the California Supreme Court handed down a decision that rewrites the state's independent contractor law.

In its decision in *Dynamex Operations West, Inc. vs. Superior Court*, the court rejected a test that's been used for more than a decade in favor of a more rigid three-factor approach, often called the “ABC” test.

Employers now must be able to answer ‘yes’ to all three parts of the ABC test if they want to classify workers as independent contractors:

- The worker is free from the control and direction of the hirer in relation to the performance of the work, both under the contract and in fact;
- The worker performs work that is outside the usual course of the hirer's business; and
- The worker is customarily engaged in an independently established trade, occupation, or business of the same nature as the work performed for the hirer.

The second prong of the ABC test is the sentence that really changes the game. Now, if you hire a worker to do anything that is central to your business's offerings, you must classify them as an employee.

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### 4. ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION OF FORM 300A

In November 2018, Cal/OSHA issued an emergency regulation that requires California employers with more than 250 workers to submit Form 300A data covering calendar year 2017 by Dec. 31, 2018. The new regulation was designed to put California's regulations in line with those of Federal OSHA.

Starting in 2019, affected employers will be required to submit their Form 300A data by March 2. For instance, the 2018 summary would have to be posted before March 2, 2019. The law applies to:

- All employers with 250 or more employees, and
- Employers with 20 to 249 employees in specified high-risk industries.

### 5. HARASSMENT NON-DISCLOSURE

This law, which takes effect Jan. 1, 2019, bars California employers from entering into settlement agreements that prevent the disclosure of information regarding:

- Acts of sexual assault;
- Acts of sexual harassment;
- Acts of workplace sexual harassment;
- Acts of workplace sex discrimination;
- The failure to prevent acts of workplace sexual harassment or sex discrimination; and
- Retaliation against a person for reporting sexual harassment or sex discrimination
- The big issue employers will need to watch out for, according to experts, is that the new law could actually keep the employer and employee from reaching resolutions for disputes.

### 6. NEW TIERED MINIMUM WAGE

On Jan. 1, 2019, the state minimum wage will increase, depending on employer size, to:

- \$11 per hour for employers with 25 or fewer workers.

- \$12 an hour for employers with 26 or more workers.

Local municipalities may have their own minimum wage rules, so always check to make sure you don't live in a city or county that has a higher minimum wage.

### 7. ACCOMMODATING LACTATING MOTHERS

A new law brings California statute into conformity with federal law that requires employers to provide a location other than a bathroom for a lactating mother to express milk.

### 8. NEW BAR FOR HARASSMENT LIABILITY

A California Appeals Court ruling in 2018 set a new standard for what constitutes harassment in the workplace in a case that concerned a correctional officer at a prison who was mocked about his speech impediment on numerous occasions by co-workers.

The significance of the case for employers is that even teasing and sporadic verbal harassment can be enough to create a hostile work environment and, hence, liability.

To reduce the chances of liability, employers should have an anti-harassment policy in writing that their staff should know and understand.

Include training and make sure there are steps for reporting harassment, a mechanism for investigating it, and that the ramifications for harassers are clear.

### 9. OVERTIME LAWS

The U.S. Department of Labor plans to propose new regulations governing overtime exemptions from the Fair Labor Standards Act in March 2019.

The DOL is aiming to update FLSA regulations that set a salary threshold below which employees must be paid overtime. Today, it remains at \$23,660,

after the Obama administration unsuccessfully attempted to raise it to \$47,476. President Trump's DOL is expected to propose a threshold somewhere between \$32,000 and \$35,000.

### 10. INDOOR HEAT ILLNESS REGULATIONS

The plan was for proposed indoor heat illness regulations to be issued before Jan. 1, 2019 for implementation before summer, but the Division of Occupational Safety and Health has said it can't meet that deadline.

Look for proposed regulations in the first quarter with possible implementation by the summer.

So far, here's what's in the draft rules:

The standard would apply to all indoor work areas where the temperature equals or exceeds 82 degrees. Employers that would be subject to all of the standard's provisions include those who have workplaces where:

- The temperature is at least 92 degrees,
- The heat index is at least 90 degrees,
- Employees wear clothing that restricts heat removal, or
- Employees work in high-radiant-heat work areas.

It would require employers subject to the rules to provide cool-down areas at all times, and they would be required to encourage and allow employees to take preventative cool-down rests when they feel the need to protect themselves from overheating.

They must also implement control measures that could include engineering controls, isolating employees from heat, using air conditioning, cooling fans, cooling-mist fans, and natural ventilation when the outdoor temperature is lower than inside. ❄️



## Feature Article

# A Look at Legislative Publications

**Chris Micheli**  
Aprea & Micheli, Inc.



**T**here are a number of publications that are regularly used by the California Legislature. Of note is that several of these publications are specified in the California Government Code. **Article 1, Sections 9700-9708**, deals generally with legislative publications. As an overarching provision, all printing for the Legislature and the individual houses is governed by the individual rules of the State Senate and the State Assembly, as well as their Joint Rules.

The Secretary of the Senate and the Chief Clerk of the Assembly are charged with printing all of the legislative bills, resolutions and constitutional amendments proposed by their respective members. All of the legislative printing is done by the State Printing Office (SPO), which is required by statute to print the laws, including initiative measures, as well as any other printing that is ordered by either the Senate or the Assembly.

By statute, the officers of the Assembly (their names and titles) must appear on the front of all Assembly publications. There is no such statutory requirement for the officers of the Senate; however, the same procedure is used in that house.

**Article 2, Sections 9720-9724**, deals with the Daily Journals of the Assembly and Senate. These, too, must be published by the State Printing Office. At least one

copy of each Daily Journal of the Assembly and Senate must be authenticated. After the final adjournment of the Legislature, the Journals for the entire session are bound and provided to the Secretary of State's Office.

**Article 3, Sections 9740-9744**, deals with the Legislative Manual. The Senate Secretary and Assembly Chief Clerk must compile a legislative manual or handbook in December of each even-numbered year. The Manual must include state officers, members and officers of both houses, lists of committees, rules of both houses, as well as the joint rules, and other information deemed to be of use to legislators. The Manual is provided to each legislator and elected state officer, as well as libraries.

**Article 4, Sections 9760-9768**, deals with preparation and printing of statutes. When a law is signed by the Governor, the State Printing Office must be notified of the law's enactment. The SPO prints a sufficient number of copies of the law, as well as resolutions. Legislative Counsel provides the SPO with any new or revised codes, which are then printed in a bound volume of the Statutes from that Legislative Session. The Department of General Services (DGS) directs the preparation of the Statutes after the Legislature's session concludes.

**Preparation of the Statutes** includes making an Index and Statutory Record. The date of approval, as well as the effective

date of each act, must be prefixed to the text of the statute. Pursuant to the Government Code, the beginning of each volume of the Statutes must include specified information. Existing law also requires the Statutes to be "bound in law buckram binding."

**Article 5, Sections 9790-9792**, deals with the distribution of statutes and legislative publications. The Department of General Services must maintain a bill-filing room for the Senate and Assembly (currently found in the basement of the old section of the State Capitol) and file all bills, resolutions, journals, and other documents. DGS must also distribute copies of laws, resolutions and journals to specified elected officials and libraries. All other copies are sold to members of the public.

**Article 6, Section 9795**, deals with agency reports to the Legislature. Any report required or requested by law that is submitted by a state or local agency to the Legislature must be submitted as a printed copy to the Senate Secretary, as an electronic copy to the Assembly Chief Clerk, and as an electronic or printed copy to the Legislative Counsel. Each report must contain a 1-page executive summary. Legislative Counsel must make available a list of the reports submitted by state and local agencies. State agency reports must be downloadable from the state agency's Internet website.

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In terms of the legislative publications, there are a number of them, with similar versions in the Senate and Assembly. **The Senate Daily File** is the agenda for all Senate business for each legislative day. Agendas for policy committee meetings along with what measures are eligible for floor actions are listed. Also included are policy committee memberships, the number of measures introduced, deadlines, and a session schedule.

**The Assembly Daily File** contains the Officers of the Assembly, the Order of Business, the tentative schedule for the entire legislative session, as well as the bills that are scheduled to be heard on the floor and during committee hearings. There are also Daily File publications for Extraordinary Sessions once convened.

**The Senate Daily Journal** is the official record of business for the Senate and is published on a daily basis. The Journal lists bill introductions, parliamentary motions, and roll call votes in policy committees and on the Senate Floor. Any official action taken by the body is recorded in the Senate Daily Journal.

**The Assembly Daily Journal** is the official record of business that has been transacted in the Assembly on a daily basis. This publication shows all roll call votes, notes parliamentary motions, lists bill

introductions, and records any other official actions taken by the Assembly.

**The Senate History** shows all actions taken on measures from the start of the legislative session. It contains detailed actions taken on Governor's appointments requiring Senate confirmation. Also, the History is a source for several useful charts such as tracking member bill limits, chapters and vetoes.

**The Assembly History** is a publication that gives a comprehensive list of all actions taken on every bill. It is published in weekly volumes by the Assembly. Legislation dating back to 1850 can be viewed using the Assembly Chief Clerk's archive publication feature.

**The Legislative Index** and Table of Sections Affected, Prior Sessions are final editions of the Legislative Index (it provides a subject matter index of all legislative measures for the current legislative session) and Table of Code Sections Affected (it provides an index of each section of the California Constitution, codes and uncodified laws affected by measures introduced) from the 1999-2000 to 2015-2016 Legislative Sessions.

**The Statutory Record** provides an index of each section of the California Constitution, the Codes and the uncodified

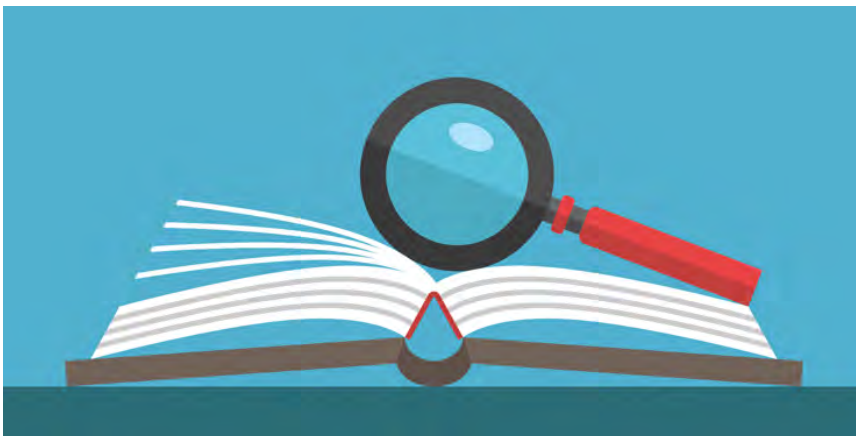
laws affected by measures enacted by the Legislature or passed by the voters. The Statutory Record indicates the year and chapter or proposition number of the affecting measure and is cumulative for a 10-year period. The Statutory Record is published in the Summary Digest by the Legislative Counsel.

**The New Laws Report** is a list of all bills enacted in a calendar year during the Regular Session of the Legislature. The list identifies the bill and chapter number, lead author, and the subject of the measure.

**The Legislative Handbook** contains the biographies of all current legislators and legislative officers; committee names and memberships; the Assembly Rules, Senate Rules and Joint Rules; and lists of State Officers, accredited press representatives, legislative sessions, and Governors of California. It is published at least once every two-year session pursuant to the Government Code.

**California's Legislature** is an in-depth introduction to the legislative process and state government. This heavily illustrated book is an excellent resource for students, lobbyists, state employees, and the general public. Topics include state history, constitutional and election law, term limits, state emblems, legislative procedure, the executive and judicial branches, and a legislative glossary.

**Agency Reports** provides a list of reports by various state and local agencies that are required or requested to be submitted to the Legislature, the Governor or both. These are maintained pursuant to the Government Code. \*



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# Member Spotlight: Butte County EMS



**Claire Parsons**  
Butte County EMS

Everyone has their own part to the story of the Camp Fire that attempted to wipe Paradise from the map on November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018. Some people remember the eyes of victims, the blank look that came even before the question “What now?” could form. Some remember the heat that brushed their face even through the windows of their cars. There were moments of fear, of courage, of hope. There

were stories of people facing their worst fears and stories of people becoming heroes. This is the story of Butte County EMS, a company that was there in November and a company that will continue to stand with its community come hell or high water.

Butte County EMS was created in 2012 as a coalition of First Responder EMS and Enloe Ambulance Service. Enloe

Ambulance Service began serving the citizens of Butte County in 1901, when Dr. N.T. Enloe established a log flume ambulance to connect the lumber mills of Forest Ranch to the medical services in Chico. Enloe’s modern iteration dates to 1978. First Responder EMS initially began as Chico Paramedic Rescue, an ambulance service that was sold by Chico Community Hospital in 1988 to two young paramedics. These paramedics were Marcus Whitacre and Byron Parsons, who worked tirelessly with two other employees to get their company off the ground. First Responder now has over 100 employees in the Butte County area and continues to work to serve the community in partnership with Enloe. Butte County EMS has been there through many of Northern California’s wildfires, but never has it or the community seen one quite like the Camp Fire.

The day of the Camp Fire started off for most Butte County EMS employees as regularly as they all do. Crews went through their normal routines of checking out the ambulances to start their shifts. The fire had



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begun earlier that morning, but as far as the crews knew it was a minor ten square mile blaze. Robin Cranston, an EMT at First Responder, was on duty with Mike Castro, a paramedic at First Responder, in their ambulance, M32-14. They started their day being able to sit down and enjoy breakfast at a restaurant with no interruptions. It seemed like an ominous sign, especially for people in the field of EMS. Robin recalled telling Mike “This is going to be a really bad day, you know that, right?” They were shortly after given the call to respond code three up to Feather River Hospital in Paradise, just happening to meet up with a crew from Enloe on the way toward Paradise. The ambulance from Enloe was M37-15 and staffed by Shannon Molarius, an EMT



at Enloe, and Sean Abrams, a paramedic with Enloe. Shannon described how the drive into Paradise kept getting darker as the smoke column stretched toward Chico in the valley below. The crew members mentioned that it was so dark once they arrived in Paradise that it could’ve been midnight, even though it was only nearing nine in the morning. The two crews, like so many others that day, had been wholly unprepared for the speed with which the Camp Fire tore through Paradise.

Back at First Responder Headquarters, Battalion Chief Chris Pickett and Division Chief Jim Clark were putting crews together to staff as many ambulances as was possible. Any personnel that were able to come in were called from their days off and any ambulances that could run were put in service. Health and Safety Officer Melody Brown worked to supply trucks and help get gear ready for crews coming in. Assistant Chief Mickey Huber immediately began calling other companies, asking for strike teams to be sent in to help with the rapidly growing fire. Strike teams came in from Bi-County Ambulance, Napa AMR, Medic Ambulance Solano, AMR Contra Costa, Paramedics Plus Alameda, and the counties of Shasta, Tehama, and Nevada. With crews underway and strike teams coming, Mickey Huber and Melody Brown with Ryan Redd (an off-duty Battalion Chief) began the trek up the hill to Paradise. Chief Huber was blocked by the fire on the southern end of town and staged with some local law enforcement to help whatever evacuees

they could. Melody Brown and Ryan Redd staged on the northern end with strike teams, realizing it was unsafe to continue farther into town. Chris Pickett and Denise Kratzer, Battalion Chief of Training, had jumped into the Battalion Chief vehicle and began to make their way up to Paradise when all of them heard a call come through the radio that an ambulance was on fire.

M32-14 and M37-15 had reached Feather River Hospital at the same time and began to load up as many patients as they could. Mike Castro remembered seeing lines of sheriff deputies at the hospital throwing as many patients and people into vehicles as they could. M37-15 ended up with three patients and M32-14 had two patients and three nurses, both only having spent fifteen minutes at the hospital loading up. Before leaving, the crews were warned they would have to attempt to drive back the way they had come due to downed power lines the other direction. M37-15 led the way and M32-14 was close on their heels as they navigated the thick smoke and chaotic traffic with the fire always closing in. Robin, driving M32-14, watched as it looked like M37-15 was bogging down. Shannon, driving M37-15, was doing all she could to keep the engine from dying, but it eventually gave up the fight and started smoking. Embers were raining down and soon the front engine compartment was ablaze. Shannon jumped out to start pulling patients from the ambulance, Mike raced to help her, and Sean began using the fire extinguisher to buy them time. With the patients getting pulled out of M37-15, Robin moved M32-14 out of the road and into a driveway she had seen on a road just ahead of M37-15. Robin and a man, who had been running down the road, were able to go back and help remove the remaining patients from M37-15. Mike kicked down the fence of the house they parked at and Shannon was able to access the house and garage through a doggie door. All the patients from M37-15 were placed within the garage, but

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## Member Profile

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the patients from M32-14 were kept in the ambulance in the chance they would have to flee again. The nurses that had ridden with Mike and Robin were put in charge of monitoring the patients, while the crews got to work to defend the house. The house still had running water at a low pressure, but it was enough to hook up several hoses. Mike got onto the roof to start clearing away pine needles. The crew members and the man who had been running down the street, who turned out to be a pediatrician, took turns putting out spot fires, wetting everything down, and creating a defensible space.

They all were going to do whatever they could to save the house, the patients, and themselves, but they all did recognize the reality that they might not make it. They were not only surrounded by fire on the sides, but above as well due to the tall trees all around. Despite limited cell service and the demands of the fight, the four trapped crew members were able to take a few precious moments to contact family members to say their goodbyes.

In the other vehicles spread across town, everyone was making efforts to reach the crews cornered by the fire. Chief Huber spent two hours trying to find an access route to the crews. Battalion Chief Pickett and Kratzer had also been trying to figure out a way in but had to turn back when the fire blocked them off. As they turned back, though, they came across three elderly residents walking down the road with canes and towels over their faces. They picked them up and got them to safety before going back in, still unsuccessful at reaching the threatened crews. Melody Brown had been keeping contact with the crews to keep updated on what was happening, but too soon the call came where the crews were telling her goodbye. For Melody, it wasn't good enough and she told the crews, "I'm sending people, people are coming. I will see you later." More ambulance crews had been pushing to go help the trapped crews, but it had not been a risk they could take. However, Fire Engine 941 was bound and

determined to reach the trapped ambulances. For several hours, the engine tried different routes only to have each thwarted by fire, until they finally found a way in along with a search and rescue team. The crews were so relieved to see the fire engine. The fire team said they were doing a good job defending the house and to keep going. After a while 941 found a clearing and everyone loaded up into the M32-14 and E941 and went back to Feather River Hospital. The crews' families were notified they had made it out safely. After a few hours a clearing opened, M32-14 took the most critical patients back into the ambulance and began to caravan down the hill out of Paradise with several sheriff deputies. Back at the hospital Shannon and Sean took a moment to sit together, heaving a sigh of relief that it was all coming to an end.

After hearing the radio traffic that the crews were safe, Chief Huber stuck around to help people reach a safe zone in the K-Mart parking lot. He heard a call come out that there was a woman in active labor and so he took off to help in whatever way he could. Upon arrival Chief Huber and several law enforcement officers realized there was nothing they could do for her but get her out of town. They formed a convoy of vehicles to navigate through traffic, thick smoke, and flames and to get the woman safely to the

staging area with the ambulances. With her safely on her way, everyone at staging realized the wind had picked up a new direction and the fire was threatening the staging area. The crews all relocated to a safer spot for staging. The worst of it seemed to be winding down.

Not every story could be told and not every story continued. Paradise lost 85 individuals to the Camp Fire and thousands of others lost their homes and livelihoods. First Responder alone had 25 employees lose their homes to the fire. All the crews working shared the frustration of being unable to save their comrades or get into some parts of town to save residents. EMS personnel work tirelessly to save others and the Camp Fire had taken away that chance. It was a fast-moving fire that no one had expected to explode the way it had. The Camp Fire left behind a lot of destruction and thousands of different accounts of that day. Some people came out of the Camp Fire with stories of loss and heartbreak. Others had stories of the bravery and the tenacity it took to survive the flames. All the stories end similarly with visions of rebuilding the Paradise that was not lost on November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018. For Butte County EMS, it simply ends with an ambulance riding out of the smoke to what could be called the most beautiful blue skies. 🌸







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# 2019-2020 Calendar of Events Save the Dates!

April 22-23, 2019	<b>2019 Stars of Life Celebration &amp; Legislative Summit</b>	Sheraton Grand, <i>Sacramento, CA</i>
September 24-27, 2019	<b>2019 Annual Convention &amp; Reimbursement Conference</b>	Hyatt Regency, <i>San Diego, CA</i>
April 13-14, 2020	<b>2020 Stars of Life Celebration &amp; Legislative Summit</b>	Sheraton Grand, <i>Sacramento, CA</i>
September 22-25, 2020	<b>2020 Annual Convention &amp; Reimbursement Conference</b>	Harvey's Resort, <i>Lake Tahoe, NV</i>

Please visit the Events section on the CAA website – [www.the-caa.org](http://www.the-caa.org) – for continuous calendar updates.