U.S. Department
of Transportation
**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

July 15, 2009

The Honorable Henry Waxman
Chairman, Committee on Energy
and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Pursuant to Section 10202(a)(7) of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy For Users (SAFETEA-LU, P.L. 109-59), the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is pleased to provide you with the third annual letter report on the activities, actions, and recommendations of the Federal Interagency Committee on Emergency Medical Services (FICEMS). As you know, Congress created FICEMS to ensure coordination among Federal agencies involved with emergency medical services (EMS) and 9-1-1 services; identify EMS and 9-1-1 needs; recommend new or expanded EMS and communication technologies; identify ways to streamline the process through which Federal agencies support EMS; assist State, local, tribal, or regional EMS in setting priorities; and advise, consult, and make recommendations on matters related to implementation of coordinated State EMS programs. The NHTSA, in cooperation with other participating Federal agencies, is to provide administrative support to the Committee.

The Committee has made progress in all areas identified by Congress through meetings held in June and December of 2008, and regular meetings of the committees of its Technical Working Group (TWG). In December 2007, Dr. Jeff Runge, Assistant Secretary for Health Affairs and Chief Medical Officer for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) was elected as FICEMS Chair and served until he left Federal service. Dr. Jon Krohmer, Acting Assistant Secretary for Health Affairs and Chief Medical Officer, was appointed to serve the remainder of Dr. Runge's term and was elected as Chair for the remainder of 2008.

An Evidence Based Guidelines conference, cosponsored with the National EMS Advisory Council, was convened in September 2008. Attended by national and international experts on evidence based medicine, the Committee developed an initial model for a national EMS evidence based practices system. A gap analysis of EMS related research has been completed.

The February 4, 2008, Report of the Joint Advisory Committee on Communications Capabilities of Emergency Medical and Public Health Care Facilities, established by the Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information, U.S. Department of Commerce, and the Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission pursuant to Section 2201(c) of the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007, included several Key Recommendations. The FICEMS held an initial discussion of three of these recommendations and requested that the TWG conduct further review and develop suggested action items.

A coordinated Web portal (www.EMS.gov) was established as a single location for EMS information from all Federal agencies.

A national EMS assessment has been designed for initiation in fiscal year 2009. A state-by-state EMS preparedness assessment has been initiated by the DHS Office of Health Affairs. An assessment of the current EMS-related activities of each agency has been completed.

The FICEMS reviewed and adopted an updated analysis of current and planned Federal activities and opportunities for collaboration relative to the recommendations of the Institute of Medicine report, *The Future of Emergency Care in the United States Health System.*

The FICEMS recognized the importance of Medical Oversight in all EMS systems. The FICEMS provided suggested grant guidance language to every Federal agency to help assure Medical Oversight in any Federal EMS grant program.

Reporting to the National EMS Information System (NEMSIS) was identified as an important step toward assessing the needs of EMS. To increase standardized reporting, language was recommended for Federal EMS grants to require compliance with NEMSIS, or allow the grantee to spend a portion of the grant on developing a compliant patient care data system.

The FICEMS and its TWG continue to help ensure improved collaboration among member agencies and look for opportunities to improve support of EMS nationwide.

A similar letter report has been sent to the Ranking Member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, United States Senate.

Sincerely yours,

Ronald L. Medford

Ronald L. Medford
Acting Deputy Administrator