

Brian Helmick  
Fire Chief



**SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF:**

Bethel Island  
Brentwood  
Byron

Discovery Bay  
Knightsen  
Morgan Territory  
Oakley

April 19, 2019

The Honorable Robert Hertzberg  
State Capitol Building, Room 313  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 438 (Hertzberg) – Emergency Medical Services (SUPPORT)**

Dear Senator Hertzberg:

The East Contra Costa Fire Protection District (ECCFPD) is pleased to support your SB 438, which prohibits a public agency from delegating, assigning, or contracting for 911 call processing or emergency notification duties regarding the dispatch of emergency response resources unless the delegation or assignment is to, or the contract is with, another public agency or made pursuant to a joint powers agreement or cooperative agreement.

ECCFPD is a rural funded fire district that protect approximately 249 square miles and over 114,000 residents. The district provides firefighting personnel and emergency medical services to the residents and businesses of the Cities of Brentwood and Oakley and to the Township of Discovery Bay, Bethel Island, Knightsen, Byron, Marsh Creek, and Morgan Territory.

Currently a call to 911 first goes to the primary Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP), which is always a law enforcement agency. When the primary PSAP receives a call, the dispatcher determines whether the call is related to law enforcement, fire, or medical needs and are routed appropriately to a secondary PSAP. Depending on the location of the emergency, the medical needs of the patient, and the capabilities of the public and private agencies, one call may be routed to the private ambulance service that contracts with local EMS agency, while another call may be routed to a fire district to send an engine.

This bill will ensure that local governments can determine the appropriate level of emergency response with its community and explicitly protects a government's right and obligation to receive and process emergency calls to ensure effective, efficient and rapid deployment of emergency response apparatus. When dealing with emergency care and other vital services, like firefighting, privatization results in an inherent pressure: the demand to turn a profit while caring for people in their most vulnerable moments.

**For these reasons, we urge your support on this important bill.**

Sincerely,

  
Brian Helmick  
Fire Chief