The NH Department of Safety, Division of Fire Standards and Training and Emergency Medical Services respectfully opposes House Bill 1441, an Act removing the requirement for the reporting of incidents by emergency medical services providers and units.

The NH Trauma and Emergency Medical Services Information System (TEMSIS) was established in 2005 to convert paper reporting to electronic reporting. All EMS Units in NH are required to submit data electronically on all responses and transports.

The establishment of this electronic data source has been of significant benefit to the EMS system in NH, and promises to be more useful as the system matures.

- Documentation is a vital component of healthcare at every level. EMS providers are a part of the healthcare system, and have been taught from day one that documentation is a mandatory component of EMS care. All areas of healthcare are moving toward electronic recordkeeping, which is a major improvement over paper recordkeeping.

- TEMSIS enables the NH Bureau of EMS and its Boards to conduct analyses of the statewide system in order to constantly improve care through protocol improvement, research, evidence-based medicine, and education.

- TEMSIS has been used and will continue to be useful as a public health surveillance tool, such as in finding increased frequency of patients with similar symptoms that might be early evidence of a public health threat (i.e. H1N1 flu) or biological agent.

- EMS Services are encouraged to use TEMSIS at the local level for a variety of issues such as quality improvement, demonstrating the value of EMS to local government, and determining equipment or staffing needs. The NH Bureau of EMS provides training to EMS service leaders how to use the software, and will assist EMS services with developing ad-hoc reports.

- NH was one of the first states to implement electronic EMS data systems, and many more states are coming on board. States are submitting data to the National EMS Information System (NEMSIS), which uses the data for EMS research and enhancing EMS care nationwide.

- Any EMS service that does billing requires documentation, and third party payers are mostly insisting on electronic records. TEMSIS provides an EMS service with an electronic billing and recordkeeping program at no cost to the service. Individually purchased electronic recordkeeping and billing software is a significant cost item.

- In New Hampshire grants for federal highway funds have been successfully achieved partly because NH has an effective EMS data collection tool that shows the impact of improvements on traffic fatalities. Removing the requirement for submission to TEMSIS could put future grants at risks.

- The ability to link electronic records from crash data to EMS data to hospital data to discharge data is a goal we are continually working toward that is an important part of improving public health and traffic safety.
EMS Incident Reports are an important liability protection for EMS services and EMS providers. TEMSIS provides a long-lasting legible document to retrieve from web-based secure storage if ever needed.

EMS Incident Reports are stored in an appropriately protected environment from a HIPAA standpoint as well as being protected from loss of the documentation.

TEMSIS was designed by multiple stakeholders in the NH EMS system who decided the importance of an electronic recordkeeping system as well as what data would be useful to improving EMS in the state. This was not a system imposed by the NH Bureau of EMS without significant amount of input from the EMS community.

Administrative Rules Saf-C 5900 adopted under RSA 153-A require submission of TEMSIS data that sets a standard, and without a mandate to adhere to that standard a significant portion of the EMS community will not comply. Having incomplete data would seriously impact the effectiveness of the TEMSIS system as a whole.