

**March 8, 2016**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**Board of Supervisors**  
**Item #9g**

**EMS Task Force**  
**Report**

**Rick Mitchell**

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March 5, 2016

Honorable Board of Supervisors  
County of Mono  
278 Main Street  
Bridgeport, CA. 93517

Dear Board Members:

I would like first of all to thank the Board for the opportunity to have served on your Emergency Medical Ad Hoc Committee. It has been an honor to have been a representative for the Tri- Valley area of eastern Mono County along the Highway 6 corridor. I have used this time in part to try and educate my fellow committee members regarding the concerns of my neighbors and friends about how we are virtually unserved by the County Paramedic Program. I have used my thirty plus years of involvement in emergency service starting with membership in several volunteer agencies, and most importantly, my twenty-one years of employment as a paramedic with Mono County EMS.

I would also like to thank Ms. Stacy Simon for her willingness to take on the difficult task of facilitating the committee's effort to produce a report for the Board after the abrupt departure of Mr. Bill Van Lente who had moderated the meetings for a number of months prior.

I must make it clear that the reason for this letter is that the EMS Ad Hoc Committee insists that its members should only speak in favorable terms as it pertains to the Committee's Report during the Supervisor's workshop scheduled for March 8<sup>th</sup> in Bridgeport. This directive was put forth by a polarity of the committee members present at the last meeting and not by a majority of the members in total. Members of the committee who had significant differences of opinion with the conclusions of the report were asked to air their concerns at some other time. In a workshop setting it would seem that a majority, whether real or perceived, should be able to present their proposals and advocate for their desired outcomes. However, in this case it appears that the denial of voice to minority viewpoints can be construed as attempt to continue the status quo and possibility the improving the services to those whom already receive them while at the same time continuing the denial of services to those who don't receive any.

The last committee meeting was used in part to coordinate a presentation to this Board. Final changes to the report were also made. Just prior to adjourning for the final time I made a statement to the members present. I told them that even though I agreed in large part to what was contained in the committee's report, that if I had been given the chance to vote on the matter, I would have indeed voted against its adoption. I explained that my concerns were not so much about what the report contained but rather the glaring absence of any recommendations that would address one of the three charges that the Board of Supervisors had given to the committee. Those charges were to have us address issues and make expert recommendations on the Paramedic Program's becoming **Financially Sustainable** while maintaining **Quality Service** and in some form being **County-Wide**. When the committee decided not to offer any suggestions as to how the unserved citizens of the southern and eastern portions of Mono County might be included in a County run program, it seemed we had ignored one third of our duties. There is simply nothing in the report to address this situation or offering support for the continuation of an unjustifiable denial of services to some county citizens.

Please understand that our paramedic services not being provided "County Wide" was discussed numerous occasions. A meaningful addressing of the grossly inequitable distribution of this large pool of EMS funds within Mono County continues to be a taboo subject just as it has been for the thirty plus years of my involvement in the industry. This is painfully obvious by its absence in the Committee's Report. However, I would like to express my deepest respect to the one participant in the committee's deliberations that presented a simple but immediately achievable plan to reallocate current County EMS resources that would result in the provision of services to not only the Highway 6 corridor but the citizens of Long Valley, Paradise, and Swall Meadows. This plan would have minimal financial impact to the County or the independent fire districts. This plan would also not unduly impact the citizens of Bridgeport or the Antelope Valley who currently receive fully one half of all Mono County EMS funding. The County's employees, it's Paramedic Program employees, developed this plan. They were asked to think "out of the box" for solutions to the problems the County is facing as it pertained to the Paramedic Program not providing county-wide services. They answered the call. This is the kind of problem solving efforts by government employees that the citizens of Mono County expect and deserve. I thank the Paramedics.

It might be assumed that this kind of proposal would be in the body of a report coming from the committee. Instead if someone wanted to view the Paramedic's presentation they would need to already know of its existence and then reference the appendix of the report and review that document online.

Page 3.  
EMS Workshop  
March 8, 2016

In conclusion, I went into the committee with a great hope that the three charges given to it by the Board of Supervisors would be addressed in a significant manner. My regret is that it now appears that this may be only be another chapter in the book entitled, *Kicking the Can Down the Road*. For that I'm truly sorry.

Respectfully in Service,

Richard W. Mitchell