

DEPARTMENT: Administration

BY: Rick Benson

PHONE: 966-3222

**RECOMMENDED ACTION AND JUSTIFICATION:**

Authorize the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors to sign a letter to Congress Member Radanovich in support of HR 2443 – Medicare Ambulance Access Preservation Act of 2009. This bill amends title IVIII (Medicare) of the Social Security Act to increase to 6-percent permanently the rate of increase in the fee schedule for ground ambulance services furnished on or after January 1, 2010, in rural and urban areas. This bill makes permanent the increase in the base rate of the fee schedule the Secretary of Health and Human Services is required to make for a trip in the case of ground ambulance services furnished on or after July 1, 2004, (and beyond January 1, 2010) for which the transportation originates in a qualified low population density rural area.

The County's ambulance provider – Mercy Ambulance, currently receives this super rural bonus which expires at the end of this calendar year. This bonus is approximately 22.6-percent over what an urban area receives for ambulance transport. Due to low call volumes and a large traveling distance, this super rural bonus is critical to rural ambulance providers being able to continue providing this crucial service. Even with receiving the super rural bonus, it is necessary for Mariposa County to contribute up to \$150,000 annually to Mercy Ambulance to allow them to continue providing service to all parts of Mariposa County.

**BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF BOARD ACTIONS:**

The Board has historically supported legislation that ultimately benefits the citizens of Mariposa County.

**ALTERNATIVES AND CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION:**

Do not authorize the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors to sign the letter. Individual Board members may write their own letters of support.

Financial Impact? ( ) Yes (X) No	Current FY Cost: \$	Annual Recurring Cost: \$
Budgeted In Current FY? ( ) Yes ( ) No ( ) Partially Funded		
Amount in Budget: \$		List Attachments, number pages consecutively
Additional Funding Needed: \$		Draft Letter
Source:		Text of Bill
Internal Transfer		
Unanticipated Revenue	4/5's vote	
Transfer Between Funds	4/5's vote	
Contingency	4/5's vote	
( ) General ( ) Other		

**CLERK'S USE ONLY:**

Res. No. 09333 Ord. No. \_\_\_\_\_  
Vote – Ayes: 5 Noes: \_\_\_\_\_  
Absent: \_\_\_\_\_  
AW Approved  
( ) Minute Order Attached ( ) No Action Necessary

The foregoing instrument is a correct copy of the original on file in this office.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Attest: MARGIE WILLIAMS, Clerk of the Board  
County of Mariposa, State of California

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy

**COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER:**

Requested Action Recommended  
 No Opinion  
Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

CAO: *[Signature]*

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### Medicare Ambulance Access Preservation Act of 2009 (Introduced in House)

HR 2443 IH

111th CONGRESS

1st Session

H. R. 2443

To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to preserve access to ambulance services under the Medicare Program.

#### IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

May 14, 2009

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

[+]  
FEEDBACK

#### A BILL

To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to preserve access to ambulance services under the Medicare Program.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the 'Medicare Ambulance Access Preservation Act of 2009'.

#### SEC. 2. PERMANENT RETENTION TO ACCESS TO GROUND AMBULANCE SERVICES IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS UNDER THE MEDICARE PROGRAM.

Section 1834(l)(13) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395m(l)(13)) is amended--

(1) in the heading, by striking 'TEMPORARY'; and

(2) in subparagraph (A)--

(A) in the matter preceding clause (i), by striking 'and before January 1, 2010';

(B) in clause (i), by inserting ', or 6 percent if such service is furnished on or after January 1, 2010' after '2010'; and

(C) in clause (ii), by inserting ', or 6 percent if such service is furnished on or after January 1, 2010' after '2010'; and

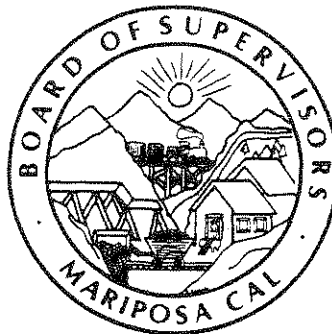
(3) in subparagraph (B), by adding at the end the following new sentence: 'The preceding sentence shall not apply to payments for services furnished on or after January 1, 2010.'

#### SEC. 3. PERMANENT RETENTION TO ACCESS TO AMBULANCE SERVICES IN SUPER RURAL AREAS UNDER THE MEDICARE PROGRAM.

Section 1834(l)(12)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395m(l)(12)(A)) is amended by striking 'and before January 1, 2010,'.

# Mariposa County Board of Supervisors

District 1 ..... BRAD ABORN  
District 2 ..... LYLE TURPIN  
District 3 ..... JANET BIBBY  
District 4 ..... KEVIN CANN  
District 5 ..... JIM ALLEN



RICHARD J. BENSON  
County Administrative Officer

MARGIE WILLIAMS  
Clerk of the Board

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July 21, 2009

Honorable George Radanovich  
United States Congress Member  
2367 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, District of Columbia 20515

RE: HR 2443 – SUPPORT

Dear Congress Member Radanovich:

The Mariposa County Board of Supervisors urges you to support HR 2443 – Medicare Ambulance Access Preservation Act of 2009. Ambulance providers in rural areas generally have lower call volumes when compared with their urban counterparts and also have the additional expense of traveling farther because of how populations are dispersed in rural areas. Because of this situation, rural ambulance providers need a higher level of reimbursement, and HR 2443 will continue the super rural bonus that ambulance providers in Mariposa County are eligible to receive.

Mercy Ambulance provides ambulance service to Mariposa County and provides three ambulance units to the County, two are stationed in the town of Mariposa and one in the town of Coulterville. The town of Coulterville generates a very low volume of calls, but due to the remoteness of this area it is crucial for an ambulance to be stationed there. Mercy Ambulance receives the super rural bonus, but it is still necessary for Mariposa County to contribute up to \$150,000 annually to Mercy Ambulance in order for the company to continue to provide ambulance service, especially in the town of Coulterville. Without the continuation of the super bonus and in these critical economic times, it could become necessary to curtail ambulance service which would have dire consequences.

Again, we strongly urge you to support HR 2443. Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

BRAD ABORN  
Chairman

BA/mbh

cc: Senator Barbara Boxer  
Senator Dianne Feinstein  
National Association of Counties  
Mercy Ambulance