



From the Office of Representative Dacia Grayber

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 28, 2026

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Rep. Grayber: Proposed CMS Rule Threatens Emergency Medical Services Across Oregon

SALEM, Ore. – A proposed federal rule from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) could jeopardize a critical source of Medicaid funding for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) providers across Oregon, putting timely access to emergency care at risk in communities statewide.

The proposed rule (CMS-2449-P) would apply funding caps to EMS supplemental payment programs, despite Congress excluding those programs from similar restrictions in the Republican budget bill passed in summer of 2025. If finalized, the rule could significantly undermine the financial stability of EMS agencies that provide lifesaving care in every corner of Oregon.

"Oregonians depend on EMS providers every day, regardless of where they live," said **Representative Dacia Grayber (D - SW Portland & E Beaverton)**, a firefighter and paramedic. "This proposed rule puts emergency medical services at risk by cutting off a critical funding source. We depend on these dollars to keep ambulances available in communities across our state. Congress intentionally excluded EMS from these funding restrictions, and CMS should honor that decision."

The impact would be felt statewide. All 36 Oregon counties already contain areas considered ambulance deserts, where residents are located at least 25 minutes from the nearest ambulance station. Reduced federal funding would make it even more difficult for EMS providers to maintain staffing, respond quickly to emergencies, and ensure communities have reliable access to lifesaving care.

The Medicaid supplemental payment programs at risk have operated successfully in Oregon for years with CMS approval. They also include accountability measures that require participating providers to invest funding in workforce wages and benefits, helping agencies recruit and retain emergency responders.

"Our message is simple," **Grayber** said. "Protect patient access to emergency care and allow Oregon's EMS providers to continue serving their communities without unnecessary federal funding cuts."

In response to the proposed rule, 35 bipartisan, bicameral Oregon legislators have sent a letter to CMS urging the agency to revise the proposal and preserve supplemental Medicaid payment programs for EMS providers.

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