

Quilcene Fire Rescue
Board of Fire Commissioners
PO Box 433
Quilcene, WA 98376

August 21, 2023

Dear Commissioners,

I want to speak to the upcoming ALS ILA you will be discussing later in tonight's meeting. I find myself in a unique position. As you may know, I have been heavily involved in the crafting of the agreement on behalf of EJFR and having been previously employed with PLFR since 2008, I was involved in the administration of the original agreement as well. While I may be employed by EJFR, more importantly I am a resident here in Quilcene, and this agreement directly affects me and my family along with the rest of your constituents.

ALS services are critical...minutes count. The agreement you are considering is vital to our community. With the ILA in place, EJFR is automatically dispatched in tandem with QFR for all ALS emergencies. Allowing a fully trained paramedic to get on scene as quickly as possible. I don't doubt that the crews for QFR are competent and provide excellent BLS care. But they are not paramedics. They cannot provide the level of care required to handle ALS calls. Any delay could have deadly consequences.

The previous contract with PLFR was extended on a hand shake agreement between the two Fire Chiefs. It is not up for renewal. As a reminder, that contract has been in place since 2009 and has never been renegotiated. I understand there are some concerns about the current proposed contract. As a citizen it's good to see that you are doing your due diligence. However, I am concerned that you are willing to scrap the agreement altogether leaving no other option for ALS services to our community. In the minutes from your June 12, 2023 meeting, it states that you were reluctant to write a letter of support for Brinnon Fire's ALS license application without more data. If you don't support our immediate neighbor to the south to provide ALS services and should you not move forward with a new ILA, where does that leave us as citizens?

It seems to me the only other option you have, is to rely on mutual aid and medevac services. The average cost for a medevac is \$35,000.00 and with our weather it's not always an option for them to fly. For your citizens who may not have good insurance or the supplemental medevac insurance, this could be catastrophic. Mutual aid has no guarantee of an ALS response, it would surely be delayed and you would get no transport fees from those calls.

A large portion of your EMS revenue comes from transport fees and as stated in your strategic plan relating to this agreement, Quilcene provides the transportation and it offsets the cost of the ILA agreement. Neither the previous or proposed agreements state that Quilcene shall be the transporting agency. It has always been up to the PM on scene, though this information was never actually relayed to the PM's. Patient care should always be the main factor in any transport decision...not money.

One thing to keep in mind. If and when a Quilcene ambulance transports with a PM, it effectively takes 2 crews out of service. Leaving our community without career staff coverage and shorting another agencies coverage by one crew. Obviously there are times when that may be necessary in best interest of the patient. But it should also be the goal keep our resources in District as much as possible, as help may take quite a while to arrive. Minutes count.

Following the merger between PLFR/EJFR there are even more resources available and in closer proximity to Quilcene than before. I strongly encourage you to keep an ALS agreement in place with EJFR.

Sincerely,



Tanya Cray