Sponsored by:
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District 14 (Mercer and Middlesex)
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District 1 (Atlantic, Cape May and Cumberland)

SYNOPSIS

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT
As introduced.
AN ACT concerning first aid, rescue, and ambulance squads and amending P.L.1987, c.284.

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

1. Section 3 of P.L.1987, c.284 (C.27:5F-20) is amended to read as follows:

3. As used in this act:

a. "State highway traffic safety program" means all highway traffic safety programs conducted by the State, political subdivisions of the State, and qualifying nonprofit organizations.

b. "Local highway traffic safety program" means a highway traffic safety program established or submitted to the Governor by a political subdivision and qualifying nonprofit organizations pursuant to the provisions of this act.

c. "Political subdivision" means any local political subdivision of this State, including but not limited to a municipality, a county, a township, a district, or a special district.

d. "Governor" means the Governor of the State of New Jersey.

e. "Director" shall mean the Director of the Office of Highway Traffic Safety of the State of New Jersey.

f. "Volunteer first aid, rescue, and ambulance squad" means a first aid, rescue, and ambulance squad which provides emergency medical services [without receiving] and whose members do not directly receive payment for those services. Members of a volunteer first aid, rescue, and ambulance squad shall not lose their status as volunteers and shall not lose the right to any benefit to which members of a volunteer squad are otherwise entitled because the squad bills third parties for services rendered.

g. "Nonvolunteer first aid, rescue, and ambulance squad" means a first aid, rescue and ambulance squad which provides emergency medical services on a paid basis.

h. "Nonprofit organization" means a nonprofit organization which provides services throughout the State and is tax exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the federal Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. s.501(c)(3)), and is not a private foundation as defined in section 509(a) of the federal Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. s.509(a)).

2. This act shall take effect immediately.

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.
This bill revises the definition of a “volunteer first aid, rescue and ambulance squad” to mean a first aid, rescue, and ambulance squad which provides emergency medical services and whose members do not directly receive payment. Under the bill, a member of a volunteer squad would not lose the status of a “volunteer” and any rights accorded volunteers even if the squad engages in third-party billing for services rendered.

Under current law, a "volunteer first aid, rescue and ambulance squad” means a first aid, rescue, and ambulance squad which provides emergency medical services without receiving payment for those services.

The purpose of this bill is to clarify that members of a volunteer first aid, ambulance, or rescue squad in municipalities with a third party billing program maintain their volunteer status, thus entitling them to certain statutorily-conferred benefits, including the right to use flashing blue lights or free training for initial certification and recertification. Under third party billing programs, private health insurance plans, auto insurance companies, and government entitlement programs, such as Medicaid and Medicare, are charged for services rendered by municipal emergency first aid squads.

To qualify as a volunteer first aid squad under the current definition, the squad cannot receive payment for services. This definition may be interpreted to mean that in municipalities which institute third party billing programs, the members of the squads are no longer volunteers because the municipality is receiving payment for the services rendered by the volunteers. To address this incongruity, the bill specifies that members of a volunteer first aid, rescue, and ambulance squad do not lose their status as volunteers when the squad bills third parties for services rendered and that these volunteers do not lose the right to any benefit otherwise conferred on members of a volunteer squad.