

Brianda Negrete *Public Comment*

#8



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**Sent:** Thursday, March 30, 2023 8:25 PM  
**To:** sbcob  
**Subject:** Public Comment: D8  
**Attachments:** 230330\_SupportFire.pdf

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Please see the attached letter of public comment on item D8.

Best,

Mark Ingalls

March 30, 2023

Dear Supervisors:

I am writing to urge you to act in the best interest of Santa Barbara County citizens and award the County EMS contract for Ambulance Service for Santa Barbara County to the Santa Barbara County Fire Department.

Santa Barbara County Fire Department (SBCFD) has been providing outstanding, critical lifesaving services since 1926. Its nationally recognized paramedic service has saved countless lives since 1973. SBCFD already provides ambulance service to numerous communities within the County that are not included in the current EMS contract with American Medical Response West (EMS). Among many advantages, county-wide ambulance service by the Santa Barbara County Fire Department would provide:

1. Direct coordination with 37 County fire stations and over 470 firefighters
2. More available ambulances
3. Better on-scene response times
4. Higher compliance percentage (100% vs. 90% with AMR)
5. Full accountability and transparency

AMR is a multinational, multi-billion-dollar company that pays copious revenues to shareholders outside of our county. Not a dollar has been reinvested back into our community. By contrast, SBCFD, a public nonprofit entity, would reinvest 100% of revenues after expenses back into Santa Barbara County Emergency Services. Santa Barbara County Fire Chiefs recently estimated that this would amount could be upwards of \$100 million over the course of a 10-year contract. It is important to note that the Santa Barbara County EMS Ambulance Service Contract is an exclusive payer-for-service contract, not funded by tax-payer dollars.

The opportunity to combine comprehensive ambulatory and fire services under SBCFD could also create a Community Advisory Group consisting of first responders, labor representatives, educational institutions, hospitals and receiving facilities, mental health providers, substance abuse providers, and others. This would allow key community stakeholders – and the community at large – to contribute collective input and coordination as essential partners in the quality and success of our Emergency Medical Services (EMS) system.

The County of Santa Barbara has an obligation to provide the highest quality, most comprehensive, and most efficient emergency services available to its citizens. By integrating the entire 911 response – from dispatch to delivery – under the proven, accountable, and community-focused capability of the Santa Barbara County Fire Department, the County has a timely and compelling opportunity to deliver on this obligation.

Please vote to award the Santa Barbara County EMS Ambulance contract to the Santa Barbara County Fire and EMS Department.

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