

WHEREAS, volunteer Fire and EMS services in rural New York State have been under pressure for many years - ongoing declining volunteerism rates which leads to the closure of departments, which leads to the expansion of coverage areas for nearby agencies, which themselves struggle with staffing – in an environment of ever-increasing costs; and,

WHEREAS, efforts to increase volunteerism, particularly in EMS, while noble, are neither sustainable nor effective enough to make a meaningful impact; and,

WHEREAS, as a result of these circumstances, many municipalities have been forced to implement paid EMS Departments, contract for services with other paid departments, or do without timely EMS coverage for their residents; and,

WHEREAS, the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the critical nature of EMS services, particularly in rural areas where EMS response is the primary source of frontline emergency healthcare to millions of NY residents; and,

WHEREAS, as a subset of the healthcare field, annual EMS cost increases strain the budgets of rural towns and villages who are nevertheless morally and ethically obligated to provide these services to their constituents; and

WHEREAS, Article XVII §3 of the New York State Constitution states that,

*“The protection and promotion of the health of the inhabitants of the state are matters of public concern and provision therefor **shall be made by the state** and by such of its subdivisions and in such manner, and **by such means as the legislature shall from time to time determine.**” (emphasis added);*

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Dryden calls upon New York State to allocate funding to local municipalities to support the provision of rural EMS services. The Town requests that New York State consider creating a Consolidated Local Street and Highway Improvement Program (CHIPS) or State Transportation Operating Assistance (STOA) model of funding wherein funds will be allocated to municipalities using formulae which takes into account call volume, coverage area and funding needs; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution shall be sent to the town’s state legislators.