

**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 long-term 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 Covid-19 pandemic 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 Dryden Town Board fully supports Assembly Bill A01091 and companion Senate Bill S01852, which would create a “CHIPS-style” state funding subsidy for municipalities who operate or contract with public and not-for-profit EMS Agencies; and,

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that copies of this resolution shall be forwarded to the Tompkins County Legislature, Assemblymember Kelles, Senator Webb, Assembly Speaker Heastie, Senate Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins, and Governor Hochul.