

# COMPREHENSIVE ALTERNATIVE RESPONSE FOR EMERGENCIES (CARE) ACT

H.R. 2538 / S. 3145

This bill would create a pilot program to test a reimbursement model for reimbursement for EMS treatment in place.

## Background

Under current Medicare policy, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) providers are generally reimbursed only when a patient is transported to a hospital emergency department. When EMS personnel are able to assess, treat, and resolve a patient's condition on scene without transport, no reimbursement is provided.

This reimbursement structure affects fire service-based EMS systems that routinely respond to 9-1-1 medical calls where transport may not be medically necessary. Additionally, transporting patients unnecessarily contributes to emergency room backlogs across the country.

The legislation authorizes the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to evaluate treatment-in-place payment models by gathering data on cost, utilization, and patient outcomes. Medicare beneficiaries make up about 40% of all patients treated by EMS.

## Ask



Cosponsor H.R. 2538 / S. 3145.

## Talking Points

- ▶ **Taxpayers benefit from reduced Medicare spending.**  
Treatment-in-place models are estimated to save Medicare between \$1.2 to \$1.5 billion annually.
- ▶ **Treatment in place improves patient outcomes.**  
Studies show patients receiving at-home care experience lower hospital readmission rates and reduced long-term care admissions compared to in-hospital treatment.
- ▶ **Fire Serviced-Based EMS providers need proper reimbursement.**  
Fire departments are currently unable to get reimbursed for patient care that doesn't involve transport, harming fire department budgets and threatening the existence of emergency services, especially in rural areas.
- ▶ **The bill helps ensure the right care, at the right time, in the right place.**  
By gathering the proper information on models for reimbursing for treatment in place, the bill aims to help align payment with patient-centered, cost-effective care.

