



# MICHIGAN SENATE

## Appropriations Requests for Legislatively Directed Spending Items

Date Submitted: 01/14/2026

**1. Sponsoring legislator's full name:**

Senator John N. Damoose

**2. Cosponsoring legislators' names (if applicable):**

N/A

**3. Intended legislatively directed spending item recipient:**

Lake Charlevoix Emergency Services Authority

**4. Physical address of legislatively directed spending item recipient and the intended location of the project or activity:**

9251 Major Douglas Sloan Road, Charlevoix, MI 49720

**5. The recipient's employer identification number:**

863745986

**6. Requested amount of the legislatively directed spending item:**

\$1,500,000.00

**7. What is the purpose and how does the legislatively directed spending item provide a public benefit that is an appropriate use of taxpayer money?**

The request is intended to help fund the establishment of an additional EMS station located on the North side of the Bascule Bridge in Charlevoix County. Currently over sixty percent (60%) of the total persons served (7983) by the EMS service reside on the north side of the bridge. People who incur emergency needs are directed by the State EMS system protocols to be transported to the closest appropriate Emergency Room. Munson Charlevoix Hospital, which is located south of the bridge is about a one (1) mile travel to the Emergency Department as opposed to Petoskey Northern Michigan Hospital's Emergency Department which would be a 17 miles trip. When minutes matter so do miles. The bridge operations are under the control of the US Coast Guard as it crosses the navigable waters of the United States. This means that the bridge must go up on a rigid schedule, every half hour for non-commercial

watercraft, when barges carrying essential supplies to our neighbors on Beaver or whenever other commercial boat traffic approaches. Under federal law and maritime regulations, marine traffic generally has the right of way over vehicle or rail traffic when it comes to the operation of movable bridges. The U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) is the primary authority for regulating the operation of drawbridges on navigable waterways, while the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) manages the state's highway bridges and coordinates with the USCG on operations and maintenance. This situation is exacerbated by the huge summertime vacation crowds, lured by the success of the Pure Michigan campaigns, which swells the population several fold, resulting in a huge increase in demand for services. Horrific traffic jams caused by the influx into a single passage point across the water on a state highway impede emergency vehicle. As emergency situations are unplanned and given that the bridge has relatively frequent interruptions in service, ambulances based in the city proper cannot respond in a timely manner to the emergencies. This results in extended response times to potentially critically ill persons which endangers their health and safety as well as delaying treatment. The alternative to a LCEMS ambulance responding is to request assistance from other agencies which are located 16-20 miles away from other service areas. When bridge service is out, if staffing allows a unit is dispatched to drive 60 plus miles around Lake Charlevoix to take position awaiting potential calls which in many cases results in only one ambulance for the entire north side. In cases where more than one ambulance is needed on scene this hour plus drive also takes a unit out of effective service until it can be repositioned, creating delays in response. The unique geography of Lake Charlevoix with only one crossing point creates a bottle neck on US-31 the major north-south highway that runs from Traverse City north to Mackinaw and the bridge to the Upper Peninsula. During peak season, tens of thousands of vehicles travel this stretch adding congestion and traffic jams which impede emergency vehicle travel. The attached map of our service area shows clearly how the bridge on US-31 is the most significant issue in this regard. Unlike other areas in the State which have drawbridges that affect traffic, there are no alternative routes available other than the 60 - mile trip around the lake. Current construction costs in Charlevoix County are estimated at \$450 to \$500 dollars a square foot. To build a basic structure capable of housing one to ambulances and staff will cost at least \$1,500,000 in today's local building market. There are no alternative structures or structures which could be remodeled to suit the needs of an EMS station in the area north of the Bridge. Given the age of the population served which is older than the State average age the utilization of emergency services has risen dramatically in the last years doubling our service volume since the inception of the service. The majority of our patients are Medicare and Medicaid insured, both of which reimburse the agency less than it costs to operate as a licensed EMS agency in the State. This trend towards greater numbers of older patients and the concomitant shift in payment sources to the above plans means that the millage already being paid by the taxpayers is used to support operations with little left to develop the additional station.

- 8. Has the legislatively directed spending item previously received or been awarded any of the following types of funding in the past 5 years? If so, how much? Check all that apply:**

N/A

**Amount**

N/A

- 9. Estimated time frame for completion of the legislatively directed spending item project:**

Given the pressing public safety needs a station on the north side has been under construction and it is estimated that the new station can be completed in 2 months. This has been undertaken with temporary financing as the Authority looks to find ways to fund the structure.

*Additional Information for Nonprofit Corporations (if applicable)*

*The answer to questions 1 to 3 must be "Yes" for the nonprofit corporation to qualify for a legislatively directed spending item.*

- 1. Has the nonprofit corporation continuously operated in this state for the preceding 36 months?**

Yes

- 2. Has the nonprofit corporation had a physical office in this state for not less than the preceding 12 consecutive months?**

Yes

- 3. Does the organization have a board of directors?**

Yes

- 4. List all of the officers and active members on the board of directors:**

Current LCEMSA Board; Roy Griffiths (Chair) – Hayes Township, Bill Gnodtke – Norwood Township, John Martin( Vice Chair) – Marion Township, Ron Chapman – Eveline Township, Dan Ulrich (Secretary) – Charlevoix Township, Mark Knapp (Treasurer) – City of Charlevoix, Ron VanZee – member at large.

*Certification By Sponsoring Legislator*

*"I certify that my immediate family members, legislative staff members, and I have no direct or indirect pecuniary interest in the requested legislatively directed spending item."*

*"I certify that the intended recipient of this legislatively directed spending item is not a for-profit entity."*

*"I certify that the information in this form is true to the best of my knowledge."*

*Senator John N. Damoose*