



Legislative Assistance Center

Template Letter

<< *Enter Date*>>

<< *Enter Name*>>

<< *Enter Address*>>

RE: Urgent message regarding _____

Dear _____:

<< *Enter Name of Institution*>> requests your support of << *Enter name and Number of Bill here*>>. Injury is the leading killer of Americans age 1 through 44; the fourth leading cause of death overall, and the leading cause of lost work productivity. This disease also costs the nation an estimated \$180 billion per year in emergency room visits, hospitalizations, and socioeconomic costs resulting from 300,000 permanent disabilities annually.

Without dedicated funding to stabilize existing trauma centers, we will likely see trauma center closures. This will have a devastating impact on our ability to treat traumatic injuries and save lives.

At times it may be appropriate to include details about your hospital at this point in the letter. The following paragraph is an example and should only be used as a guide:

<< *Enter Name of Institution*>> is a non-profit community hospital located in << *Enter city and state*>>. Last year we cared for and treated ##### patients in our Emergency Department including ##### severely injured trauma patients. We are a paramedic base and one of two Level II Trauma centers in << *define area*>>. We are also proud to be designated as a Pediatric Critical Care Center and an Emergency Department Approved for Pediatrics. << *Enter Name of Institution*>> role in the community has been, and continues to be, to provide compassionate, high quality, affordable health care to all members of our community and all others who seek care at our facility including the poor and under-served. We are a disproportionate share provider, reflecting our dedication to provide healthcare services to those who are unable to pay for services.

Trauma centers around the country are facing financial crises. The strain from inadequate funding – resulting from intense marketplace changes, reductions in Medicare reimbursement and the rising number of uninsured – jeopardizes the viability of existing trauma centers in the <state/nation>. The high degree of readiness that trauma centers must maintain also creates hidden costs that the public does not see. Like fire departments and law enforcement, which must maintain personnel and equipment always at the ready, whether in use or not, trauma centers and related hospital facilities (e.g., intensive care unit beds) must be immediately available at all times.

Trauma centers play a vital, unparalleled role in our health care delivery system. For more than 20 years, it has been well documented that access to trauma care saves lives. Trauma care – immediate, coordinated surgical and medical care designed to provide optimal, life-saving treatment for victims of major physical injury goes far beyond what is provided in the average community hospital emergency department. A trauma center must maintain specialized equipment and a panel of physician specialists, including a trauma surgeon, immediately available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to handle the most challenging traumatic injuries.

In addition, care of the injured patient in a Trauma Center goes beyond the immediate lifesaving resuscitation. Trauma care extends through emergency treatment to hospital care, rehabilitation and outpatient care. At a Trauma Center specially trained teams of doctors, nurses, and other health care specialists work together to meet the recovery needs of each patient. Since these specialists treat so many serious trauma victims they are adept at working efficiently as a team to provide the best possible outcome for the trauma victim giving them the best possible chance to regain useful lives.

Any proven intervention that saves lives and prevents permanent disability resulting from serious injury should be a <<***national or state***>> priority. This was never more important than in a post 9/11 world where we work to prepare for the next terrorist attack but should not forget the Trauma Centers that provides a vital component in the care of the patients.

Sincerely,