

MOTION PUBLIC SAFETY

In recent years the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) has experienced a chronic shortage in the number of trained and certified paramedics on the force. At the present time, they estimate a shortage of 70 paramedics in a force of approximately 722. Stretching these existing paramedics to backfill vacant positions, keeping up with expansions of paramedic services, and an historical ten percent attrition rate, make it difficult to maintain paramedic staffing on ambulances and fire companies at an optimal level. Furthermore, as paramedic shortages persist, it results in forced overtime, and morale among existing paramedics continues to sink.

In order to train firefighters to become paramedics, the LAFD enrolls its firefighters into one of three paramedic schools in the Los Angeles region. Most of them attend either Daniel Freeman at UCLA or the Paramedic Training Institute at El Camino College. The LAFD pays for its firefighters to attend the training and also pays to back fill their positions while they are being trained. This approach is expensive.

When a firefighter attends training but does not pass the certification test, LAFD's investment in that paramedic is lost. Further, some firefighters train as paramedics but then leave the force. It is highly likely that offering the training in-house would mitigate those problems and could also lead to better trained paramedics by integrating LAFD norms and procedures into the curriculum.

The LAFD should thoroughly examine the possibility of operating its own paramedic school. Although LAFD notes that no fire service in the U.S. currently operates its own paramedic school, there appears to be no restriction to doing so. Although it costs LAFD less to recruit a certified paramedic than to train one, the LAFD has been unable to recruit enough certified paramedics to meet their needs. It is believed that an in-house LAFD paramedic school could also train new paramedics for surrounding jurisdictions, providing a valuable service, and off-setting the overall cost of the program.

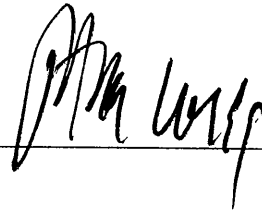
I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council direct LAFD, with assistance of the CLA and CAO, to report within 60 days on the feasibility of establishing an LAFD operated paramedic training center to serve the training needs of both the LA City Fire Dept. and other surrounding jurisdictions.

PRESENTED BY: _____

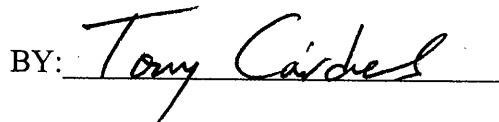

JOSE HUIZAR

Councilmember, 14 District

BY: _____



BY: _____



AUG 16 2006

EG

06-1971