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MEDIA CONTACT:

OSFC & PEMA – Jeff Jumper, jejumper@pa.gov

DOH – Mark O’Neil, ra-dhpressoffice@pa.gov

Shapiro Administration Visits Cumberland Goodwill EMS in Carlisle, Highlighting Statewide Budget Investments in Public Safety

Governor Shapiro’s Budget Proposes Doubling State Investment in First Responders

Carlisle, PA – Today, the Shapiro Administration visited Cumberland Goodwill EMS to discuss how the 2024-25 budget proposal to increase the Fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Grant Program to \$60 million will help communities’ critical first responders recruit more people, update outdated safety equipment, and provide additional training.

“Our first responders take great risks every day to protect communities across the Commonwealth,” **Pennsylvania State Fire Commissioner Thomas Cook** said. “These additional investments in the Office of the State Fire Commissioner’s (OSFC) Fire and EMS Grant Program will support the good work they do by helping departments pay for the ever-rising costs of public safety.”

The Governor’s proposal will double funding to \$60 million from the \$30 million the program receives today. The grant is open to fire, EMS, and volunteer rescue squad organizations across the Commonwealth, covering a variety of eligible expenses including purchase or repair of ambulances and fire trucks, firefighting and medical gear and tools, training materials and certifications, recruitment and retention materials, construction and upgrades to buildings, and debt reduction.

Assistant Chief Nathan Harig of Cumberland Goodwill EMS described how money from the current grant program has been critical in funding the stretcher systems used to safely transport patients in their fleet of ten ambulances. Each stretcher system costs upwards of \$40,000 and doubling the grant funding available to them will help to keep up with the rising expenses for essential, life-saving equipment needed for years to

come. Currently, the maximum annual award amount per organization for EMS grants is \$15,000 with fire grants maxed out at \$20,000.

“This is a critical investment in emergency medical services (EMS) professionals and firefighters,” **Acting Secretary of Health Dr. Debra Bogen** said. “These men and women put their lives on the line every time they are called to duty. They deserve our support in every way possible, and providing grants for equipment, facility upgrades, training, and recruitment is the least we can do.”

“Our dedicated first responders need support now more than ever,” said **Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency Director Randy Padfield**. “Since emergencies begin and end in local communities, we need to invest in our local fire & EMS organizations to ensure the Commonwealth’s emergency response system stays strong for current and future risks they face.”

The Shapiro Administration has been focused on creating safer communities through investments in first responders. Governor Shapiro knows firsthand that first responders are on the frontlines keeping their communities safe – and his 2024-25 budget proposal shows a continued investment in equipment, training, and staffing needs so fire and EMS organizations can do just that.

For more information on the Fire and EMS Grant Program, including a list of current recipients, please visit the [Office of the State Fire Commissioner website](#).

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