

# Millions of Veterans At Risk of Losing Access to Air Medical Services



SCAN ME

## The Problem

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is considering cutting its reimbursement rate for air medical services, bringing it in line with Medicare. This is problematic because Medicare currently reimburses air providers at less than 50 percent of the true cost of transporting a patient.



## The Details

- This rate change is expected to go into effect early next year and could leave millions of veterans without access to emergency air medical services.
- We have already seen more than a dozen air ambulance bases close this year and more are expected if air medical providers are not reimbursed appropriately.
- **This change is especially dangerous for veterans in rural and underserved communities who live far from the closest medical center or VA facility and rely on air ambulances for lifesaving transport in emergencies.**

## The Solution

- The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services is in the process of collecting transport cost data from air providers and producing a report on the results. This data will be extremely helpful to ensure reimbursement rates reflect the true cost of doing business.
- Without this report, the VA cannot properly determine the adequate reimbursement rate for air ambulance services, which is why the VA must delay any change to its reimbursement rate until CMS publishes the cost data report.

**We cannot allow veterans to lose access to this lifesaving service. We must act now – the health and safety of millions of veterans is on the line.**

