

Argument in Favor of Measure EE

One of the special things about living in Albany is the quality of our ambulance services. Unlike many cities, our fire department emergency responders have the right to transport patients directly to a hospital emergency room—without handing them off to a private ambulance company. These transport rights confer several advantages.

First, because we have an ambulance stationed at our fire department, response times for medical emergencies average less than four minutes. Second, because of the potential closure of Alta Bates hospital, more patients will have to be transported to hospitals in Oakland. During these longer trips, injured residents will receive continuous care from our fire department paramedics. Third, our fire department paramedics are among the most experienced and professional in the Bay Area.

But there are problems ahead. Alameda County has significantly cut back on its paramedic support. With rising expenses for advanced lifesaving equipment and aging assets needing replacement, more and more of the costs of Albany's ambulance services are being covered by the city's general fund. In addition, our fire department has seen a 34 percent increase in the number of requests in calls for emergency services during the past 10 years.

In the past, Albany voters have generously supported our ambulance services by voting in favor of two dedicated parcels taxes. Measure N is an annual charge of \$22.90, while the Paramedic Supplement is an annual charge of \$85.10. Both are adjusted for inflation. This ballot measure will raise the Measure N parcel tax next year from \$23.61 to \$68 per residential unit. It will provide an additional \$360,000 to fund advanced lifesaving measures.

Because this is a dedicated tax, the ballot measure requires a two-thirds majority to pass. Measure EE is a great investment in Albany's future. Please vote YES.

Nick Pilch, Albany Mayor

Peggy McQuaid, Albany Vice Mayor

Peter Maass, Albany City Council Member

Michael Barnes, Albany City Council Member

