



**AIR & SURFACE
TRANSPORT
NURSES
ASSOCIATION**

Our Mission...

*“Advance the
practice of
transport
nursing and
enhance the
quality of
patient care.”*

May 13, 2009

To: Patient First Air Ambulance Alliance

The Air and Surface Transport Nurses Association (ASTNA) supports the efforts of the Patient First Air Ambulance Alliance (PFAAA) to seek governmental assurance of state primacy in the regulation of medical care aboard helicopter air ambulances and to develop a classification framework for critical care transport services. Safety and care quality are the foremost concerns of ASTNA, no matter which form of transportation is involved.

Patients transported by helicopter ambulance are not able to make decisions about their transport mode or provider in the same fashion as other commercial air passengers. When they require medical helicopter transport, they deserve assurance of transport safety, care quality, and timely transport to an appropriate hospital. States clearly oversee ground medical transportation and nursing practice, but there is uncertainty about their role in the oversight of helicopter medical services. The regulation of medical care for critically ill and injured patients during transport should not be approached differently simply because the patient is flown by helicopter ambulance, as opposed to driven in a ground ambulance.

To protect patient safety, enable the provision of high quality patient care, and ensure the appropriate coordination of emergency medical services, clarity of state ability to enforce standards for patient care aboard air ambulances, as well as for those in ground ambulances, is essential. As the voice of transport nurses, the Board of Directors of ASTNA, the largest professional organization devoted to critical care transport, endorses the efforts of the PFAAA and offers any assistance we can provide.

Kevin High, RN, MPH, CFRN, EMT
ASTNA President 2008 - 2009