

PETER DRAPER

INDEPENDENT MEMBER FOR TAMWORTH

MEDIA RELEASE

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DRAPER WARY OF AMBULANCE FEE PROPOSALS

Member for Tamworth, Peter Draper has expressed concern about a proposal to increase fees for ambulance services that is to be considered by the Minister for Health early this year.

In August 2003, the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal report into NSW health services stated that: "The Pricing Schedule of ambulance services should be reviewed to ensure a more efficient use of ambulances."

Mr Draper believes that options other than increasing charges need to be fully explored before the Government imposes additional financial burdens on NSW residents.

"I recognise that there is a need to review the costs of running our ambulance service, but am concerned that some cost issues may be better dealt with through operational changes, rather than fee increases," said Mr Draper today.

"Whilst there is an increasing demand on our ambulance services, I understand that some patients are being transported unnecessarily and I believe the government should look first into how the service can be better managed before considering fee increases."

"In particular, I will be contacting the Minister for Health opposing any fee changes that disadvantage regional users," said Mr Draper.

"I would be particularly concerned about increases to the per kilometre rate, as this places an inequitable burden on those who reside outside the metropolitan areas and regional cities.

End Release

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