

211.490 Legislative findings concerning provision of trauma care.

The General Assembly finds that:

- (1) Trauma is a severe health problem in this state and a major cause of death and long-term disability;
- (2) Trauma care is an essential public service;
- (3) Trauma care is significantly limited in many parts of Kentucky, particularly in rural areas where there is a growing danger that some communities may not have adequate emergency care;
- (4) It is essential for persons in need of trauma care to receive that care within sixty (60) minutes immediately following injury, referred to as the "golden hour," for that is when the potential for survival is the greatest and the need for treatment for shock or injury is most critical;
- (5) Kentucky's emergency preparedness efforts require the establishment of an efficient statewide trauma care system that can be mobilized to save the lives of trauma patients who are victims of terrorism or natural disasters;
- (6) Trauma centers save lives and money because access to trauma care can mean the difference between full recovery and serious disability that requires expensive long-term care and results in a loss of economic productivity;
- (7) Regional preparedness planning has identified trauma care as a priority, and some grant funding has been obtained to initiate trauma care planning;
- (8) It is in the best interests of the citizens of Kentucky to establish an efficient and well-coordinated statewide trauma system to reduce costs of medical care and the greater economic impact of lost wages and productivity and to reduce the incidence of inappropriate and inadequate trauma care and emergency medical services; and
- (9) Existing trauma centers are facing an increasing number of uninsured patients, declining reimbursement, and rising malpractice insurance premiums that threaten continued community access to trauma care. Therefore, financial assistance is needed to support existing trauma centers and establish new trauma centers.

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