

Commissioner Sheridan,

I recently retired from government service, so my wife and I have been doing quite a bit of traveling. Last month we spent a week in downtown Chicago (I hadn't been there in over 35 years). We were pleasantly surprised at how little siren noise there was in Chicago compared to New York and Los Angeles. We actually saw ambulances turning off their sirens and only using them as needed.

Upon doing some research, I see that HB5632 was recently passed, but it doesn't take effect until January. It appears that ambulances are already implementing it now.

Is this why your streets are so quiet?

Anthony Ansolabehere
Retired Assistant Assessor - Kern County California

Hello. My name is Larry Langford. I am the media director for Chicago Fire. I saw your email on sirens. The house bill you refer to does not really change how we use sirens. We have always given drivers the option to use sirens with discretion. So no real change in our protocol. We always interpreted the old law to mean the warning system must be in continuous operation while on a run. We read that to mean the lights must be on but we used common sense in not running the siren in automatic continuous mode. Some private ambulance companies read it a different way and the new law may affect how they operate. Thanks for the note. We try to be good neighbors.