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THE MAINE SENATE
131st Legislature

Testimony of Senator Richard Bennett
before the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety
LD 981, “An Act to Require All Emergency Medical Services Persons to Be Trained in the
Dispensing of Naloxone Hydrochloride”
March 27, 2023

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Salisbury and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety: I am Senator Rick Bennett of Oxford, and I have the honor of serving 14 communities in Western Maine in the State Senate. I am pleased to cosponsor LD 981, “An Act to Require All Emergency Medical Services Persons to Be Trained in the Dispensing of Naloxone Hydrochloride.”

As Maine’s substance use crisis only worsens, ensuring that our emergency medical personnel are trained in the dispensing of naloxone is imperative.

According to the Maine Drug Data Hub, in 2022 the state had 716 fatal overdoses and 10,110 total overdoses. That same source notes that in 2021 a minimum of 8,907 individuals were saved from opioid overdoses, which is nearly the population of Old Orchard Beach.

The Legislature has taken steps to make sure naloxone is readily available to law enforcement, medical personnel, and members of the public. Having EMS employees trained on dispensing this life saving drug only makes sense.

I ask for your favorable consideration and thank you for your attention.