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**Testimony of J. Sam Hurley, MPH, EMPS, NRP**

Director, Maine Bureau of Emergency Medical Services (Maine EMS)

Department of Public Safety

**In Support of LD 1119**

*“An Act to Clarify the Criminal Statutes with Regard to Assaults on Emergency Medical Services  
Persons”*

Presented by Senator Bennett of Oxford

BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC  
SAFETY

Public Hearing: April 24, 2023

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Salisbury, and honorable members of the Joint Standing  
Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety:

My name is Sam Hurley, and I am the Director of Maine Emergency Medical Services, Maine  
EMS, within the Department of Public Safety. I am submitting written testimony on behalf of  
Maine Department of Public Safety and Maine EMS in support of LD 1119, *An Act to Clarify the  
Criminal Statutes with Regard to Assaults on Emergency Medical Services Persons*.

While Maine EMS does not currently collect data regarding assaults on EMS clinicians in the  
State of Maine, there is a significant body of research that highlights the increased risk of  
violence for EMS clinicians practicing within the field. In a recent systematic literature review  
by Maguire et al., there are numerous studies from around the world that indicate that EMS  
clinicians are at higher risk for workplace violence.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, there is likely significant

<sup>1</sup> Maguire BJ, O’Meara P, O’Neill BJ, Brightwell R. Violence against emergency medical services personnel: A  
systematic review of the literature. *Am J Ind Med.* 2018;61:167–180. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ajim.22797>

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underreporting of violence against EMS clinicians based on multiple data sources.<sup>2</sup> The same paper found that:

The rate of assault cases resulting in lost workdays for EMS personnel in the United States is 56.5 per 10,000 full time workers per year, a rate about 23 times higher than the national average of 2.6 for all occupations<sup>3</sup> and about seven times higher than the rate of 9.1 for health care providers<sup>4</sup> (p. 174).

Maine EMS would encourage the Committee to support this bill that clarifies the language regarding assaults on EMS clinicians in the State of Maine. Feel free to reach out to me anytime if there is any additional information that I can offer the Committee.

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> Maguire BJ, Hunting KL, Guidotti TL, Smith GS. The epidemiology of occupational injuries and illnesses among emergency medical services personnel. ProQuest. 2004.

<sup>4</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics. TABLE R8. Incidence rates for nonfatal occupational injuries and illnesses involving days away from work per 10,000 full-time workers by industry and selected events or exposures leading to injury or illness, 2002—Continued. 2003. Available online at: <http://www.bls.gov/iif/oshwc/osh/case/ostb1275.pdf>. Accessed 4 May 2016.