



Local Government Center 60 Community Drive Augusta, Maine 04330-9486

Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer, and Distinguished Members of the Health & Human Services,

I am Chief Bill Gillespie from Liberty and I write to you today as a Fire & EMS Chief and the Legislative Liaison for the Maine Fire Chiefs Association, representing more than 400 Fire Chiefs throughout the state. I am writing in **support** of LD 1751 **An Act to Maximize Federal Funding in Support of Emergency Medical Service**. Thank you, Senator Curry of Sponsoring this Legislation.

This is one of the many pieces of Legislation to come out of the Blue-Ribbon Commission. The efforts of this group have outlined a list of recommendations to help services that are struggling and develop more long-term plans for the future of EMS services in the State.

As the Chief of a small Fire based transport service, I speak first-hand about the struggle we face. My department provides EMS services, including transport, to 3 towns in Western Waldo County with a call volume of 380 calls in 2022. With our current Billing amount for those calls we produce enough revenue to cover the basic supply cost and a small amount set aside for a truck replacement account. Due to the lack of volunteers in 2017 we were forced to request an increase from the town we provide services to. This was a 100% increase request to cover payroll for personnel to man the station during the day. This call volume is not adequate to provide the necessary income to cover all costs associated with running this service.

With 65% of the transporting EMS services within the State of Maine, the members of the Maine Fire Chiefs have supported all efforts to increase Maine Care and Medicare reimbursement. Most small services struggle to make ends meet based on the current reimbursement rates. We also agree that adding the option of billing on non-transporting calls is a great idea as it will allow us to recoup some funds for expenses. This will no doubt assist with our bottom line.

We strongly encourage your support in this legislation.

Respectfully submitted,

Chief Bill Gillespie

Liberty Fire & Rescue, Legislative Liaison MFCA

