

Kate Domenico
Maine Veterinary Medical Association
LD 2156

Good afternoon Senator Bailey, Representatives Perry and Fay, and members of the Committee, I am Dr. Kate Domenico, and I am a practicing Emergency and Critical Care Doctor of Veterinary medicine in Maine and the President of the Maine Veterinary Medical Association. I have been in Veterinary Practice for over 20 years. I am also co-author of the Protocols referenced in the current legislation under review. Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding LD 2156: An Act to Authorize the Provision of Emergency Medical Treatment for Certain Dogs.

I am here today to speak neither for or against this legislation. As co-author of the Protocols used in training licensed emergency medical services persons in the state of Maine I am in favor of legislation that provides immunity for these individuals who may, in an event of an emergency, provide life saving care for such high value assets - the law enforcement working canines and search and rescue canines. The consequences of withholding life-saving medical first aid in the field could mean loss of life and loss of the large investment made to obtain, fully train and maintain these working canines.

As a licensed veterinarian, I am in support of the ability of these licensed emergency medical services persons to provide life-saving, triage, pre-hospital care to these canines. Providing advanced medical care to a canine patient is not without risk and the legislation should require the consultation of a veterinarian (Telehealth) before any advanced medical Protocols are utilized in the field.

In order to support this legislation, I would like to see the following amendments:

-Licensed emergency medical services persons that are presented with a medical emergency in the field involving a working law enforcement canine or Search and rescue canine, must contact a licensed veterinarian in Maine by phone for guidance before providing advanced medical care. This is currently covered under the Maine veterinary practice act under Telehealth.

-The current Protocols should be required to be reviewed every 2 years (or sooner if there is an urgent need) by a Maine licensed veterinarian on the MDPB (Medical Direction and Practices Board). A Veterinarian could be appointed to the MDPB by the MVMA (Maine Veterinary Medical Association). In addition, the MDPB (with the inclusion of a licensed Veterinarian) would also define what an approved training course is and what the CEH requirements/refresher requirements would be.

-The current verbiage of the proposed legislation as written, "certain canines" should be more specific: identifying law enforcement working canines and certified search and rescue canines.

-I urge the Committee to consider removing Section 2 from the bill. The Protocols should be governed by the MDPB (with the inclusion of a licensed veterinarian), and should not be incorporated into the Maine Veterinary Practice Act.

I appreciate the opportunity to present my testimony today and I look forward to continuing the hard work on behalf of these talented working canines in the State of Maine. Thank you.