



ISLESBORO AMBULANCE ASSOCIATION
P.O. Box 277
Islesboro, ME 04848

Testimony for the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety

Senator Pinny Beebe-Center, Representative Tavis Hasenfus, Co-Chairs

I want to thank the Co-Chairs and the Committee for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of LD 841. My name is Doug Welldon, I'm a year-round resident of the island of Islesboro and I am president of the Islesboro Ambulance Association. We are a non-profit 501(c)(3) not affiliated with the Town of Islesboro. Our mission is to support Islesboro's Emergency Services through public fund raising. Those funds are spent to pay for EMS training and ambulance equipment.

You should know that both my wife and I myself have benefitted through hospital transport by ambulance to the mainland hospital. In both cases we were comforted by well qualified EMTs taking care of us, using the latest medical equipment available throughout our entire ambulance transport, which included the ferry.

The Islesboro Ambulance Association Board of Directors supports this legislation for the following reasons:

- Islesboro ferries have been berthed on the island since 1936 for the purpose of permitting after hours emergency ambulance runs to mainland hospitals.
- We note there have been no changes to this successful policy until a recent proposal, with various issues being cited by the MeDOT Commissioner.
- We believe whatever issues there are can be mitigated through focusing on the issues, and doing some hard work to solve the problem. It is NOT necessary to change the 89-year precedent that has worked and can STILL work by berthing our ferry on Islesboro, allowing for emergency runs, no matter what the hour.
- The Ambulance Association is dismayed at the prospect of seeing our well-equipped ambulances sitting on the island dock at 2 AM, while a critically ill patient is transferred down an incredibly steep ramp at low tide in the middle of a howling storm, with a dangerous transfer to a pitching lobster boat. The process in reverse would be repeated upon arrival on the mainland. This is not right.
- There is no substitute for full, complete transportation to the hospital across Penobscot Bay in a safe ambulance aboard the ferry.
- The Maine State Ferry Service is just that: a SERVICE to our islanders. We only ask that decisions be made with the idea of service FIRST, and then work back from the service starting point to find solutions for issues. Don't reverse the process, forsaking service and endangering patients.
- The Islesboro Ambulance Association supports the bill and asks that your votes be "ought to pass" for LD 841.

Thank you.

Doug Welldon
President
Islesboro Ambulance Association