

Good afternoon, Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, and members of the committee. My name is Christina Dolan, and I am here today to testify in support of LD507

I live in Van Buren with my husband Rick and our 4 young children. I am here today to share with you all my family's experience with LifeFlight of Maine and how important their role is in connecting people like us from rural Maine, to the care they need.

Our journey with LifeFlight of Maine began in September of 2020 when I unexpectedly went into preterm labor during a routine medical appointment with our twin boys Brian and Matthew. Only being 33 weeks with not only twins, but one twin had a known heart condition, the medical staff immediately called upon LifeFlight of Maine to transport me to Bangor for a safe delivery.

Unfortunately by the time the plane arrived, I was too far advanced to safely fly. I would have to give birth in Caribou. Plans changed and the plane left to retrieve not 1 but 2 NICU teams to aid in the safe delivery and subsequent transport of my baby boys.

As I was rolled into the operating room I just kept praying that the LifeFlight Team would arrive soon. Just as baby A was delivered a nurse yelled out "Don't worry Christina, LifeFlight is here." Baby A finally cried, and I did as well out of pure relief. 2 minutes later Baby B was born and gave a short cry and went blue and limp. My heart sank and I watched to my left a nurse in a green flight suit work alongside another nurse on our baby.

We didn't need one transport, we needed two. So the medical team made a decision who was to go to Bangor first. Matthew our Baby B went first as he was immediately intubated and fighting for his life. They quickly rolled him into my room to say "see you later" and off he went. A few hours later they came back for Baby A, Brian and transported him to Bangor. The boys did well in the NICU and were able to come home after 26 days!

Unlike many, Our story with LifeFlight doesn't end here. In March of 2021 Matthew had open heart surgery at Boston Children's Hospital. After some serious complications we finally came home in May. 5 days after being home Matthew stopped breathing in his crib. We rushed him back to the same hospital where he was born where they tried their best to stabilize him. The ER doctor knew he needed to get back to Boston. LifeFlight of Maine was called again to get our boy to the life saving medical care he needed. Again on the fixed wing he was transported to Portland to await a bed in Boston.

LifeFlight of Maine has helped our family not once, but twice. Without updated infrastructure this lifesaving service is not possible. All three of these flights on the fixed wing ,we were the lucky ones. 40% of the time flights on a fixed wing don't happen due to the plane being out of service for required or unscheduled maintenance because there is only one plane. Without this service I am certain one if not both of my young boys wouldn't be here today. It's stories like ours that show the importance of LifeFlight of Maine's infrastructure and fleet. Please consider authorizing a general fund bond for LifeFlight of Maine to support those in need like Brian & Matthew who without this service, wouldn't have stood a fighting chance to live.