

Testimony Before the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs

in Support of L.D. 507 "An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Fund LifeFlight of Maine"

April 15, 2025 1:00 Public Hearing

Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, and Distinguished members of the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs. My name is Allison Navia. I have been an airport manager in the State of Maine for over 16 years now and I am Chair of the Maine Aeronautical Advisory Board for the Maine Department of Transportation. I have worked with LifeFlight of Maine throughout my career and their work has saved lives of people close to me. LifeFlight plays an incredibly important role in our state that goes beyond both aviation and medical care.

The LifeFlight business model is time-tested, thoroughly planned, and responsible. The professionalism and expertise of their staff at every level ensure that their highly technical mission, which combines precision aviation and hospital-level care, not only functions but continuously improves and expands. The ability to fund raise and enter into public-private partnerships speaks to past impacts and future success. The organization is largely dependent on the state's aviation infrastructure, which is underfunded and often struggles to maintain existing facilities, let alone upgrade to more technologically advanced and safer systems. LifeFlight has helped many airports and hospitals improve this infrastructure, but cannot do this solely through its own funding mechanisms. This bond provides a critical piece of the financial puzzle to combine with previous bond issues, grants, and many other funding initiatives.

As Chair of the Aeronautic Advisory Board to the DOT I also note improvements and additions of weather systems and fuel not only help assure the availability of LifeFlight but improve the safety of all aviation and viability of our community airports. Improving weather forecasting sources for the National Weather Service forecasts also helps all of our industries such as farming, forestry, and fishing who depend on accurate and timely weather.

A bond for LifeFlight of Maine is a worthy investment for the people of our State, its visitors, businesses, and the infrastructure needed to keep them all safe.

Please vote "ought to pass" on LD 507.

Respectfully submitted,

Allison Navia

Airport Manager, SFM (Sanford) and IZG (Fryeburg)

Chair, Maine Aeronautical Advisory Board to Maine Department of Transportation