



LD 35 – An Act to Strengthen Local Emergency Medical Services by Increasing the  
MaineCare Reimbursement Rate for Ambulance Services

**Testimony in Support**

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services:

My name is Joe Kellner of Windham, and I serve as the Chief Executive Officer of LifeFlight of Maine. I come before you today with substantial experience and background on reimbursement matters related to emergency medical services in Maine. I have served on two consecutive Blue Ribbon Committees on emergency medical services. My testimony today is on behalf of LifeFlight of Maine.

LD 35 creates a federal matching program for payments to emergency medical services that are not municipal or are not already part of a similar program through parent hospitals.

I support this approach because it remains impossible to break even on the provision of ambulance services in Maine through patient revenues for any service responding to 911 calls. The cost increases for many years have exceeded payment increases. Based on the size (volume) and rurality of a service, they will “lose” \$150-\$1,800 per call that they go on in provision of the service – this must be made up through supplemental revenue sources. Many services are now relying on per-capita fees, which have been the subject of many headlines here in Maine. CMS cost reporting data substantiates my estimates on the revenue to cost gaps.

Maximization of federal funds is good policy for Maine, while shielding impact to local taxation.

During language review, the committee should consider the exemption on air medical services, as there are no services that do exclusively air medical. LifeFlight is happy to be included in this initiative to the extent our participation adds value.

You may also note that there is a similar proposal, which we oppose, that takes the supplemental monies accreted through this program and allocates them away from ambulance services. We support this approach, as it keeps the money where it is needed most.

Thank you for your consideration.

-Joe