



Local Government Center 60 Community Drive Augusta, Maine 04330-9486

Senator Bailey and Representative, Mathieson and distinguished members of the Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services,

I am Chief Bill Gillespie from Liberty, proudly serving as Fire Chief and also President for the Maine Fire Chiefs Association, representing over 400 Fire Chiefs statewide. We represent more than 70% of all EMS services in the state.

Today, I am honored to submit this letter in support of LD 1192, **An Act to Increase the Commercial Insurance Reimbursement Rate for Ambulance Services.**

Maine Emergency Medical Services remains in crisis despite your recent efforts to put money into the system to help reinvigorate services. Reimbursement rates are compared to extremely low Medicare rates which have contributed to services losing money. We still find that most agencies are struggling to make ends meet and continue to rely heavily on local tax dollars to keep the doors open. This bill puts a larger burden on private insurers to help bridge the gap and raise rates to a more appropriate level. Maines first responders are grateful for all the support, however the solution to this problem is not an easy, quick or inexpensive fix.

With well over 20 EMS related bills submitted to the 132nd Legislative session, it is evident that we are working hard to find a logical and worthwhile solution to this intricate problem. We continue to ask you to consider all options that are presented.

Respectfully,

Chief Bill Gillespie