



Town of Vinalhaven
19 Washington School Rd.
Vinalhaven, ME 04863
Phone: 207-863-4471 or 207-863-4343
Fax: 207-863-4393

April 28, 2025

Testimony in favor of LD 1231

Like our neighboring islands, Vinalhaven Emergency Services is firmly committed to making emergency transport decisions based solely on what is in the best interest of the patient. We routinely rely on a variety of transportation methods—including Penobscot Island Air, privately operated boats, and LifeFlight of Maine—to meet the unique needs of our community. However, these options are not always medically appropriate or logistically feasible.

There are many situations where a patient's condition requires them to remain inside the ambulance, or where adverse weather makes any transfer to a boat unsafe. In such cases, the process of moving a patient—from an ambulance, down a ramp, onto a float, into a boat, across Penobscot Bay, off the boat, up a ramp, and into another ambulance—presents serious safety risks. Under these circumstances, the Maine State Ferry Service becomes not just the best option, but the only safe, reliable, and medically appropriate mode of transportation.

While Vinalhaven is fortunate to have two ferries—one stationed in Rockland and one on the island—we fully understand and strongly support the concerns raised by our neighboring communities. The loss or limitation of ferry access for emergency vehicles would have real and immediate consequences for patient safety.

Thank you for your time and your service to the people of Maine.

Marjorie E. Stratton, Vinalhaven Town Manager
Pamela C. Alley, Vinalhaven Select Board Chair