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Testimony of Rep. Jessica Fay introducing
**LD 2156, An Act to Authorize the Provision of Emergency Medical Treatment
for Certain Dogs**

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services

Sen. Bailey, Rep. Perry and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Care Insurance and Financial Services, my name is Jessica Fay and I represent House District 86, which includes Casco, Raymond, Frye Island and a part of Poland.

Thank you for the opportunity to present and testify in favor of **LD 2156, An Act to Authorize the Provision of Emergency Medical Treatment for Certain Dogs**. This bill would create an exception to the law governing veterinary licensing for trained emergency medical services persons providing emergency medical treatment to certain dogs in accordance with protocols adopted by the Medical Direction and Practices Board.

In 2018, I sponsored and the Legislature passed LD 1716, An Act To Protect Persons Who Provide Assistance to Law Enforcement Dogs, Search and Rescue Dogs and Service Dogs, which allowed emergency medical services persons to be trained to treat injured law enforcement dogs when those dogs are injured in the field. At the time, there were some liability barriers to EMTs receiving the necessary training that could save an injured K9. With the help of then Rep. Bailey and the Judiciary Committee of the 128th Legislature, this bi-partisan bill was passed and signed into law.

Over the past few years, that training has ramped up, but another barrier to this policy reaching its full potential has been identified. There is a potential conflict between the EMS protocols that have been designed and a part of the Veterinary Practice Act. Last summer the same group who worked on the original bill reached out to me to sponsor this bill to address that concern.

This bill would close the loop on making sure that when a law enforcement dog is injured, whether it is on a search and rescue mission or responding to a domestic violence call, that dog will receive the same response that a human officer would. These animals are highly trained and valuable assets, but they are also loyal partners and family members. We should make sure they have the best chance to survive an injury.

There are folks here who better understand the technical nature of the protocols from the perspective of emergency medical services and from the perspective of veterinary medicine – as well as members of law enforcement. I hope you will ask them any questions you may have. I understand that there is additional language that will make this a better proposal, and I support that change being incorporated into the bill.

It has been a privilege to sponsor LD 2156, and I look forward to working with you to pass this bill to protect Maine's law enforcement dogs. Thank you for your time.