

Testimony of William O'Neal

Director, Maine Bureau of Emergency Medical Services (Maine EMS)

Department of Public Safety

IN OPPOSITION of LD 238

"An Act to Protect Emergency Medical Services Persons Right to Work in Multiple Health Care Settings"

Presented by Senator Farrin of Somerset

BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services

Work Session: Tuesday, February 4, 2025

Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson, and honorable members of the joint standing committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services

My name is Wil O'Neal, and I am the Director of Maine Emergency Medical Services (Maine EMS)

I am testifying on behalf of the Maine Department of Public Safety and Maine EMS **IN OPPOSITION** of LD 238, **"An Act to Protect Emergency Medical Services Persons Right to Work in Multiple Health Care Settings"**

In healthcare, we generally look at innovation and new initiatives through several lenses.

Does it decrease **COST**?

Does it improve **QUALITY**?

Does it enhance **PATIENT EXPERIENCE**?

This bill as proposed does not accomplish these goals. This bill works to establish a murky relationship between a patient and the care they receive. There may be more than one financial bill, or services that aren't clearly covered by insurance. With this bill there is a loss of clear oversight and regulatory structure that is in place for both clinics and hospitals, and EMS. When we regulate prehospital providers in the prehospital environment, there is an established structure that works to keep patients safe and provide accountability for the care they receive. Our 911 patients are some of our most vulnerable citizens in their hour of need. What happens when this bill pulls our EMS clinicians from the field, where they are so desperately needed, into clinics and hospitals?

The prehospital environment is the environment for which our EMS clinicians are trained, certified and licensed to provide care. The model suggested in this bill has been brought before this body in different forms in the past and faced strong opposition from the community you trust to keep patients safe. The same tough and unanswered questions about this model of care still remain today. I implore you to vote **OUGHT NOT TO PASS** on LD 238.

Thank you, I am more than happy to answer any questions you may have.

Wil O'Neal