



Northern Light Health
Government Relations
43 Whiting Hill Road
Brewer, Maine 04412

Office 207.861.3282
Fax 207.861.3044

**LD 176 An Act to Establish a Regional Ambulance Service in Southern
Penobscot County**

**Testimony in Support
January 10, 2025**

Northern Light Health
Acadia Hospital
A.R. Gould Hospital
Blue Hill Hospital
C.A. Dean Hospital
Eastern Maine Medical Center
Home Care & Hospice
Inland Hospital
Maine Coast Hospital
Mayo Hospital
Mercy Hospital
Northern Light Health Foundation
Northern Light Pharmacy
Sebasticook Valley Hospital

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus, members of the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety, my name is Lisa Harvey-McPherson RN. I am here today providing testimony on behalf of Northern Light Health and our ground ambulance service providers speaking in support of this bill.

Northern Light Health member organizations include 10 hospitals located in southern, central, eastern and northern Maine, nursing facilities, air and ground ambulance, behavioral health, addiction treatment, pharmacy, primary and specialty care practices and a state-wide home care and hospice program. Ninety three percent of Maine's population lives in the Northern Light Health service area. Northern Light Health is also proud to be one of Maine's largest employers with more than 10,000 employees statewide.

Northern Light Medical Transport and Emergency Care provides primary emergency ambulance services in Penobscot, Piscataquis, Somerset, Hancock and Aroostook counties. We also provide mutual aid in regions of Washington County. I want to thank Representative Fredette for hosting discussions with Southern Penobscot regional ambulance providers and for sponsoring this legislation.

Like all ambulance service providers in Maine, we are challenged with critical labor shortages, increases in the cost of providing services and chronic underpayment for the emergency care that we provide. While we work collaboratively with our regional ambulance partners, the system is inherently inefficient with each service provider working independently to sustain services in local communities. This bill provides an important solution to chronic emergency response service challenges.

A regional approach will reduce redundancy by locating resources strategically to allow for best case primary response of ambulances and improved back up responses. This bill would support placing ambulances throughout a response area rather than congregated into any one area. A regional approach allows for a more consistent response plan.

This bill allows each community the opportunity to join this collaborative effort and help guide the direction of EMS as the landscape changes. Each town that opts in has an equal voice and any town may choose to opt out if the program does not align with their goals.

Northern Light Medical Transport provides emergency care to more than 100 towns in Maine. We have varying collaborative agreements in place as part of those responses. We can see the benefit of aligning response plans with a consistent approach throughout the newly formed region. In addition to responding to emergency calls, we can help support the other aspects of this bill including education of emergency medical personnel and developing protocols, policies and procedures to support high standards of clinical care.

We ask that you support this important legislation. Thank you.