



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

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus, members of the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety, my name is Joe Kellner of Windham, and I am the chief executive officer of LifeFlight of Maine – a statewide not-for profit critical care air ambulance service. I have worked in Emergency Medical Services in Maine for over 20 years and have experience with nearly every delivery model of EMS that we have here. In addition, I spent seven years serving on the Board of Emergency Medical Services, including two years as its chair, and participated in both Blue-Ribbon Commission studies on Emergency Medical Services in Maine.

I am very pleased to see this enabling legislation come before the committee, which has potential to increase the efficiency with which emergency medical services are delivered in southern Penobscot County. One of the repeating themes in EMS in Maine is the inefficiency with which it is delivered, and the duplication of overhead structures required to maintain nearly 150 individual transporting services. Each of these services must have a chief, a training officer, a unique quality plan, a billing agency, enrollments with Medicare and MaineCare, and the list goes on.

By creating a pathway to join, together EMS agencies can leverage a larger scope and scale and enhance the efficiency with which EMS is delivered to a particular region.

While my testimony today is more broad than Penobscot County, it is where I spent years as an EMS clinician and leader, and I feel compelled to share that the area is filled with great minds and a collaborative attitude, ripe for this type of arrangement.

As you consider this legislation, I would encourage you to think more broadly and consider an alternative approach here. I would take this a step further and eliminate any barrier to the establishment of regionalized ambulance services through deregulating any limitation that currently exists. That services must come before the legislature to accomplish this every time is yet another barrier to the improvement of the EMS system. In my testimony for LD 245 today, I will also speak toward the issues with Maine's approach to the essentiality of Emergency Medical Services – this doesn't fix the problem, but it does improve the situation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.