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February 12, 2025

*Testimony of Representative Suzanne Salisbury against*  
**LD 210, An Act Making Unified Appropriations and Allocations  
from the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of  
State Government and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law  
Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the  
Fiscal Years Ending in June 30, 2025, June 30, 2026, and June 30,  
2027 – Part TT.**

*Before the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs*

Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, and other distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs, I am Sue Salisbury and I represent House District 128, which includes part of Westbrook. I am here today to oppose **LD 210, An Act Making Unified Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending in June 30, 2025, June 30, 2026, and June 30, 2027 – Part TT.**

My testimony concerns the proposed Ambulance Tax in part TT of the biennial budget. I was honored to serve on the Legislative Blue Ribbon Commission to Study Emergency Medical Services in the 130<sup>th</sup> and 131<sup>st</sup> Legislature. Throughout both terms, the commission worked closely with EMS stakeholders to determine what could be done to save the EMS system that is quickly failing. We heard about services that were closing because reimbursements did not cover the cost of providing care. In the 131<sup>st</sup> Legislature, we secured a record amount of funding for EMS, \$31 million, that was meant to be given out in two distributions. The first distribution was meant to stabilize EMS services that were in danger of closing. The second distribution is sustainability grants intended for services for long-term planning. Unfortunately, the money has been mired in rulemaking and has been very slow to go out.

Similar “tax and match” legislation has been proposed in the past. Stakeholders worked with an outside vendor willing to administer this program, which would allow us to maximize current funds and draw down federal funds. We were met with pushback that the program would be hard to manage and not have the desired effect we were looking for.

Members of both EMS Blue Ribbon Commissions, along with interested parties, including the Maine Ambulance Association, meet regularly to talk about previous and current EMS legislation. We have posed several questions regarding this proposed tax but have not been able to get answers:

- What is the scope of this tax? Currently, it lists all non-municipal services. This unfairly burdens providers that depend on this subsidy for operational stability.
- Will the federal funds received from this tax be shared with all ambulance services in Maine, or will it only be used for MaineCare shortfalls?
- Are hospital-owned ambulances part of this new tax?
- What revenue is being taxed?
- Who will receive the federal matching funds? Will only the taxed ambulance providers receive the increased MaineCare reimbursement?
- Will the increased reimbursement apply to all ambulance transports, including interfacility transfers, or just 911 emergency calls?

I implore members of AFA to try and get to the bottom of these questions before implementing this tax that unfairly targets some ambulance services and does more harm to a system in dire need. Thank you for your consideration.