

LD 784



March 10, 2025

The Honorable Donna Bailey
3 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

RE: SP 343 – An Act to Require Health Insurance Coverage for Specialized Risk Screening for First Responders

Dear Chair Bailey, Chair Gramlich, and Members of the Joint Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services Committee:

On behalf of RAYUS Radiology, we strongly support SP 343, which mandates health insurance coverage for specialized risk screening for first responders. These brave individuals face heightened exposure to carcinogens and other hazardous conditions that significantly increase their risk of developing life-threatening diseases. Our radiologists' experience in diagnosing cancer in first responders has shown that early detection is critical in improving survival rates and reducing the burden of advanced disease, which is often more difficult and costly to treat. By ensuring coverage for essential screenings such as advanced imaging and blood biomarker tests, this legislation will help protect those who dedicate their lives to protect us.

First responders are regularly exposed to harmful substances such as smoke, toxic chemicals, and industrial byproducts, all of which are known to increase the risk of cancers including lung, prostate, and gastrointestinal cancers. Many of these cancers remain asymptomatic until they reach an advanced stage, making routine and specialized screenings vital. The screenings outlined in this bill—such as mammography, colonoscopy, and comprehensive blood panels—align with best medical practices and are essential for detecting disease in its earliest, most treatable stages. Our radiologist partners have witnessed firsthand how delayed diagnoses lead to devastating outcomes. This bill will provide first responders with access to life-saving preventive care without the barriers of out-of-pocket expenses or restrictive insurance policies.

Additionally, removing prior authorization barriers for these screenings is a necessary step in ensuring timely access to care. Too many clinicians have encountered cases where bureaucratic delays have prevented patients from receiving the prompt diagnostic testing they need. By streamlining and modernizing the approval process and eliminating cost-sharing requirements, this legislation ensures that first responders receive the care they need without unnecessary financial or procedural obstacles.

We urge you to support SP 343 and advocate for its passage.

Sincerely,

Zachary Brunnert
Senior Director, State Legislative Policy
RAYUS Radiology