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April 2, 2025

**Testimony of Meghan Russo**  
**Maine Department of Transportation**  
**Before the 132<sup>nd</sup> Legislature, Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and**  
**Public Safety**

**Neither for Nor Against**

LD 841, *Resolve, to Study the Delivery of Emergency Medical Services to and Ferry Service Effects on Island Communities in the State*

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Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety, I am Meghan Russo, Director of Government Affairs at MaineDOT. MaineDOT is neither for nor against LD 841, but does have thoughts regarding the potential overlap of the subject matter of this bill with other bills pending before the Transportation Committee and regarding possible language revisions.

This resolve proposes to establish a working group that would study the delivery of emergency medical services of island communities in Maine. It directs the Maine Office of Community Affairs to oversee the study and requires a report back of its findings to this committee by December 3, 2025.

By way of background, the Maine State Ferry Service (MSFS), under the oversight of the Maine Department of Transportation, statutorily provides ferry service to six island communities off of the coast of Maine. These include the communities of North Haven, Vinalhaven, Islesboro, Frenchboro, Swans Island, and Matinicus. Maine has 15 unbridged island communities that have year-round populations.

There are roughly 11 bills this session that have been submitted that pertain to the island communities served by the MSFS. Most of these bills have or will be referred to the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation. Some have been printed, but others are still in LR form. It is likely that the committee will hear these bills on one day to be respectful of any individuals from island communities who intend to testify.

If possible, MaineDOT would recommend that this bill not be scheduled for work session until other relevant bills can be discussed. At least one is similar in nature and could negate the need for a study, should it pass.

Should the committee wish to move forward with LD 841, MaineDOT has suggested language amendments we would ask the committee to consider. I have attached these suggestions to my testimony for the committee's reference. I would like to mention that our proposed amendment language suggests that such a study would be better conducted by the Office of Emergency Medical Services within the Department of Public Safety. Should the committee decide to move forward with LD 841 and be open to discussing our proposed amendment, we would request the opportunity to speak further with our sister agency about their thoughts on conducting such a study.

Thank you and I would be happy to take your questions and provide additional information for the work session.

Resolve, to Study the Delivery of Emergency Medical Services to and Ferry Service Effects on Island Communities in the State  
L.D.

## **Resolve, to Study the Delivery of Emergency Medical Services to and Ferry Service Effects on Island Communities in the State**

**Sec. 1. Maine Office of Community Affairs to convene working group. Resolved:** That the ~~Maine Office of Community Affairs~~ Department of Public Safety, Office of Maine Emergency Medical Services, as established in the ~~Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5, section 3202~~ and referred to in this resolve as "the office," shall convene a working group to study the delivery, cost, legal and regulatory requirements, and allocation comparison to EMS needs and cost statewide of emergency medical services to and related ferry service effects implications on island communities in the State.

**Sec. 2. Membership. Resolved:** That the working group under section 1 consists of the following members:

1. The director of the office, or the director's designee;
2. A representative of an island community municipal government that is served by the ~~Department of Transportation, Maine State Ferry Service;~~
3. A representative from an island community ~~of an island community representing a municipal government~~ that is not served by the ~~Department of Transportation, Maine State Ferry Service;~~
4. ~~A representative of the Department of Public Safety, Maine Emergency Medical Services;~~
54. A representative of the Department of Transportation, Maine State Ferry Service;
65. A representative of LifeFlight of Maine;
7. ~~A representative of the municipal government of an island community; and~~
6. A representative providing EMS services on an island served by the Maine State Ferry Service;
78. A regional and statewide representative of emergency medical services; of an island community.
8. A member of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety; and
19. A member of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation.

**Sec. 3. Report. Resolved:** That, by December 3, 2025, the office shall submit a report that includes the findings and recommendations of the working group under section 1, including suggested legislation, for presentation to the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety. The committee may submit legislation based on the report to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature.

### **SUMMARY**

This resolve directs ~~the Maine Office of Community Affairs~~ the Department of Public Safety, Office of Maine Emergency Services to convene a working group to study the delivery of emergency medical services to and ferry service effects on island communities in the State. The office is required to submit a report by December 3, 2025 to the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety and the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation, which may submit legislation to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature.