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Testimony of Genevieve McDonald
Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety
In FAVOR of LD 841
Resolve, To Study The Delivery Of Emergency Medical Services To And Ferry Service Effects On Island Communities In The State

April 2, 2025

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus, and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety, I am Genevieve McDonald of Stonington, a Senior Policy Advisor with Preti Strategies, and I am testifying before you today on behalf of the Town of Islesboro in support of L.D. 841, **Resolve, To Study The Delivery Of Emergency Medical Services To And Ferry Service Effects On Island Communities In The State.**

The geographical location of unbridged offshore islands presents unique and persistent challenges in providing timely and efficient emergency medical care. Communities served by the Maine State Ferry Service face acute challenges related to the coordination of EMS delivery and the scheduling, availability, and reliability of emergency transportation services.

This resolve proposes the establishment of a working group to undertake a comprehensive study of EMS delivery to island communities and assess the impacts of ferry service on emergency response capabilities. The inclusion of stakeholders from the Department of Public Safety, Maine Emergency Medical Services, the Department of Transportation, LifeFlight of Maine, municipal governments, and island EMS providers ensures a well-rounded, pragmatic approach to evaluating these issues.

We respectfully request the committee consider amending the bill to specify that the working group members (7.) representing the municipal government of an island community and (8.) representing emergency medical services of an island community, are members of an island community that is served by the Maine State Ferry Service.

Aligning the study's scope on islands served by the Maine State Ferry Service would allow for a more targeted and effective analysis of issues directly related to state-provided ferry service, and enhance the working group's capacity to develop solutions that directly address the specific operational and logistical challenges associated with state-run ferry services.

Maine's offshore islands contribute immensely to our state's cultural and economic vitality. The well-being of island residents and our visitors depends on our collective willingness to address these challenges with determination and care. By identifying gaps and proposing actionable solutions, this initiative will inform policy decisions with the potential to enhance emergency response times, optimize resource allocation, and ultimately save lives.

We respectfully urge the committee to advance this legislation. Thank you for your time and consideration and I am happy to answer questions from the committee.