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*Testimony of Representative Holly B. Stover in support of*  
**LD 507, An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Fund**  
**LifeFlight of Maine**  
*Before the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs*

Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, and honorable members of the Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in strong support of LD 507, legislation that proposes a \$13,485,000 bond issue to strengthen Maine's emergency medical aviation infrastructure through investments in LifeFlight of Maine.

I offer this testimony not only as a State Representative, but as a lifelong resident of Boothbay, where the need for reliable, fast, and advanced emergency transport has only grown more urgent over the last decade.

Twelve years ago, our region experienced a significant loss with the closure of St. Andrews Hospital in Boothbay Harbor. Since then, our nearest emergency care facility is Miles Campus at Lincoln Hospital in Damariscotta, roughly 30 minutes away—on a good day.

But in the summer months, as those of you familiar with Route 1 know, a 30-minute drive can become an hour or more. Congestion, road construction, tourists, and seasonal volume all make consistent, timely access to emergency care an uncertainty that our residents and visitors simply cannot afford—especially in life-threatening situations like stroke, trauma, or cardiac arrest.

That's why LifeFlight of Maine is a vital part of our emergency medical system.

The investments proposed in LD 507 directly support the tools that LifeFlight needs to keep saving lives, especially in communities like mine, where geography and infrastructure present significant challenges.

This bond would:

- Provide \$4.15 million to upgrade helipads at hospitals across the state—including a critical new helipad at Lincoln Hospital Miles Campus, our region’s closest emergency care center and a designated Critical Access Hospital. This upgrade is essential for ensuring that patients from the Boothbay peninsula, the Pemaquid peninsula, and our island communities can be transported quickly and safely.
- Invest in fueling infrastructure to reduce mission delays, which is particularly important for rural and coastal regions.
- Modernize communications and weather systems, helping to coordinate response across agencies and ensure flight safety during increasingly unpredictable Maine weather.
- And provide for a dedicated emergency fixed-wing aircraft to serve when helicopters can’t fly.

We must recognize that LifeFlight is not a luxury—it is a necessity. It is the difference between life and death in critical cases. And it is often the only timely path to advanced medical care for residents in Boothbay, Boothbay Harbor, on Southport and Westport Islands, as well as throughout Lincoln County’s coastal and island communities.

By voting to advance this bond to the voters, we give Mainers the chance to affirm a shared value: that no matter where you live in Maine, your access to emergency care should not be a matter of luck, distance, or the season.

On behalf of the people of Boothbay and surrounding communities, I urge you to support LD 507 and help ensure that LifeFlight remains ready, equipped, and able to serve every corner of our state.

Thank you, and I welcome any questions you may have.