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Testimony of the Maine Ambulance Association Before the Maine Health and Human Services Committee

April 17, 2025

**LD 1429 - An Act To Provide Full Reimbursement For Emergency Ambulance Services
Provided To Mainecare Members**

Neither For Nor Against

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer and other distinguished members of the Health and Human Services Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

My name is Butch Russell, and I am the Executive Director of the Maine Ambulance Association. On behalf of our members, we want to thank the sponsor of LD 1429 for their support of EMS and for recognizing the urgent funding challenges ambulance services face.

We respectfully offer the following context:

While we fully support the goal of increasing MaineCare reimbursement, current federal regulations do not allow base payments to exceed the Average Commercial Rate (ACR). LD 1429's intent of "full reimbursement" may unintentionally conflict with these federal rules.

We would be grateful to see this bill move MaineCare reimbursement to the ACR—it would be a major step forward for ambulance services. However, we also understand the fiscal constraints facing the Legislature this session and the difficulty of appropriating significant new funds.

For that reason, we encourage the Committee to focus its efforts on a more sustainable solution: the development of a Supplemental Payment Program and Intergovernmental Transfer (IGT) model, as outlined in our testimony on LD 35. This approach would allow the state to draw down additional federal funds without increasing the burden on the General Fund, while strengthening EMS statewide.

We appreciate your continued commitment to Maine's EMS services and stand ready to assist in advancing a solution that works within state and federal frameworks.

Butch Russell, Executive Director
Maine Ambulance Association