



Maine Community College System

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

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TO: Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy
Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs
FROM: Becky Smith, Director of Government and Community Relations
RE: Testimony in opposition to LD 1369, *An Act to Provide Emergency Medical Services Training Through the Maine Community College System*
DATE: May 5, 2025

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs. My name is Becky Smith, and I am providing testimony in opposition to LD 1369, *An Act to Provide Emergency Medical Services Training Through the Maine Community College System*.

We appreciate Rep. Fredette's vote of confidence in MCCS' EMS training but cannot provide EMS training without the appropriate resources to do so. In fact, we already do the training that is contained within the bill if it is appropriate and allowed within our accreditation.

As this committee heard earlier this session, the Maine Community College System has educated emergency responders for decades and trains a significant number of new responders annually. Our training centers have been critical partners to the EMS system in Maine. Our collaboration with Maine EMS, local municipalities and private providers has allowed us to standardize program structure and has enabled the colleges to align and share curriculum, develop a new curriculum for EMT and Advanced EMT, share instructors and provide joint instructor training. It has also allowed us to update Training Center Standards and implement Psychomotor portfolio testing across all programs. We have worked together to expand the training network across the state to ensure the ongoing viability of EMS education, especially in rural areas. The demand for EMS education statewide has never been higher, and this collaborative approach has been critical in our efforts to help meet those demands, especially in rural areas, and provide equitable access across the state. Six of our colleges and our Harold Alfond Center for the Advancement of Maine's Workforce now offer some level of EMS training. Our colleges support high school programs at the CTEs to build a career pathway and engage potential responders early in their education. We train hundreds of Mainers annually so they can become EMTs or increase their skills and become Advanced EMTs or Paramedics.

However, EMS training is expensive. This externally accredited training is resource and labor intensive. At each certification level students complete 12-500 clinical hours in addition to lecture and lab instruction with a ratio of as few as eight students to one laboratory instructor. A percentage of these required clinical hours can be met through simulation which has educational benefits, but these sophisticated labs increase equipment costs. Students are also required to complete a range of certifications as well as undergo background checks—AHA, BLS, ALS, et al— all of which have to be tracked. Moreover, hands-on training uses a significant amount of consumable supplies: this training is after all replicating real work experiences. These all add up to a significant cost to educate EMS providers. Moreover, the intentional expansion of training across the state, particularly in rural areas, also increases the cost. The current cost to educate EMS providers at each level of certification per student is: