

Testimony of William O'Neal

Director, Maine Bureau of Emergency Medical Services (Maine EMS)

Department of Public Safety

IN SUPPORT of LD 1981

"An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Emergency Medical Services' Board and the Blue-Ribbon Commission to Study Emergency Medical Services in the State"

Presented by Senator Baldacci of Penobscot

Cosponsored by Senator Curry of Waldo

BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Public Hearing: Monday May 19th

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus and honorable members of the joint standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety

My name is Wil O'Neal, I am the Director for Maine EMS, and I am here today to advocate for a crucial piece of legislation: LD 1981, "An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Emergency Medical Services' Board and the Blue-Ribbon Commission to Study Emergency Medical Services in the State."

This bill enables Maine EMS to implement key recommendations from the Blue-Ribbon Commission's January 2024 report, as outlined below.

Recommendation B-1: "The Legislature should provide Maine EMS with the funding, staffing, and associated resources necessary to properly support its core functions: licensing and regulation of EMS entities; provision of resources and other support to licensed EMS entities; and systemic planning, oversight, and stewardship of the statewide EMS system."

Recommendation B-3: (proposes a strategic reorganization of our governance structure)

"The Legislature should support the proposed reorganization of the EMS Board, which would establish a 9-member EMS Board charged with the strategic direction and oversight of the EMS system, as well as a 9-member EMS Licensing Board, charged with the regulation of EMS licensing."

This realignment will significantly enhance our capacity to process licensing matters efficiently, provide crucial support for our new Community Paramedicine program, and allow the EMS Board to focus strategically on the overall direction of our system, all while maintaining transparency and efficiency for our workforce.

Your continued support is fundamental to the growth and sustainability of the EMS system in Maine. Therefore, I urge you to vote OUGHT TO PASS on LD 1981.

Thank you, I am more than happy to answer any questions you may have.

Wil O'Neal, Director, Maine EMS