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Testimony in Support of LD 749

An Act To Establish A Council On Health Systems Development

Hearing Date: April 20, 2021 – 10:00 AM

Senator Sanborn, Representative Tepler, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services.

My name is Jay Bradshaw. I live in Belgrade and serve as the Executive Director of the Maine Ambulance Association (MAA), a non-profit trade association committed to improving and supporting Maine's EMS system. Our members include emergency medical services of all sizes and corporate structures, and from every corner of the state.

Our association is pleased to both offer our support for establishing the council described in this bill and request adding a representative of emergency medical services (EMS).

EMS has been described as residing at the intersection of public health, health care, and public safety – which provides both considerable opportunities and a bit of confusion. As many on this committee are aware, EMS is much more than just those who respond to emergencies and transport patients to hospitals. EMS is very much part of the health care system and involved in critically important areas such as interfacility hospital transfers (both routine/scheduled and critical care) and is significantly impacted as rural hospitals change or curtail essential services.

EMS is also very much on the front lines of public health initiatives such as, but certainly not limited to, the ongoing COVID-19 testing and vaccination efforts.

Having EMS involved in the Council brings to the table another important health care partner and we appreciate your consideration of and support for this request.