



# Maine County Commissioners Association

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## *LD 1602, An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Stakeholder Group Convened by the Emergency Medical Services' Board on Financial Health of Ambulance Services*

May 2, 2023

Chair Bailey, Chair Perry, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services, my name is Stephen Gorden and in addition to serving as a member of the board of commissioners for Cumberland County, I am writing today in my role as chair of the legislative policy committee of the Maine County Commissioners Association. We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony *neither for nor against* LD 1602.

**About MCCA.** Briefly, the Maine County Commissioners Association was established in 1890 to assist Maine's county government in providing vital services to Maine citizens in a responsive, efficient, and credible manner. The Association is based in Augusta, represents all 16 of Maine's counties, and is governed by a board with representation from each participating county.

**What does LD 1602 do?** LD 1602 proposes statutory changes based on recommendations included in the report of the Stakeholder Group convened by the Emergency Medical Services' Board on the financial health of ambulance services in the State. The bill removes the repeal date related to the rate of reimbursement health insurance carriers are required to pay for covered emergency services provided by an ambulance service provider, and it removes the limitation that carriers are only required to reimburse for covered emergency services provided by an ambulance services provider. Additionally, LD 1602 requires health insurance carriers to reimburse ambulance service providers for nontransporting services at the same reimbursement rates for covered emergency services and prohibits health insurance carriers from requiring an ambulance services provider to obtain prior authorization before transporting an enrollee to, between, or from a hospital to a nursing home or other health care facility and requires carriers to reimburse for those services.

Further, this bill requires health insurance carriers to consider the requirements of the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services related to medical necessity when establishing the carrier's own policies for medical necessity and requires carriers to reimburse ambulance services providers for covered services rendered through community paramedicine.

Moreover, LD 1602 specifies the cost and performance metrics for the program for collecting and reporting cost and performance metrics related to emergency services that must be established by the Emergency Medical Services' Board in rule and proposes to add 2 positions to the Emergency Medical Services' Board to facilitate that program. Finally, the bill proposes to require the Maine Health Data Organization to report information on payments for ambulance services on its publicly accessible website.

**Discussion.** Ambulance services are an essential service to ensure the health and safety of all Maine people, and we appreciated the Stakeholder Group's discussion around this important issue of access to emergency medical services, particularly access among the rural counties and communities of our state. The Stakeholder Group made good progress with regard to a number of challenging issues, but there is still more work to be done on this issue.

**Comments of MCCA re LD 1602**

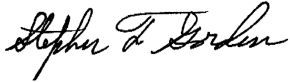
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As this Committee is aware, ambulance services, along with emergency medical service organizations generally, are in danger of failing due to a lack of funding. While our Association does not take a position on the specific recommendations of LD 1602, we write to urge that the Stakeholder Group be extended so that discussions on this issue may continue.

**Conclusion.** We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill, and if you have questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to let us know.

Respectfully submitted,



Stephen Gorden  
Chair, Legislative Policy Committee

cc: Commissioner Richard Dutremble, President, MCCA  
James I. Cohen, Verrill Dana, LLP, MCCA Legislative Counsel