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Testimony of J. Sam Hurley, MPH, EMPS, NRP

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

Department of Public Safety

In Support of LD 1653

“Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Chapter 124: Emergency Medical Services Personnel Reporting Rule, a Late-filed Major Substantive Rule of the Department of Health and Human Services, Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention” (Emergency)

Presented by Representative Meyer of Eliot

BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Public Hearing: Tuesday, May 11, 2021

Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services:

My name is Sam Hurley and I am the Director of Maine Emergency Medical Services, Maine EMS, within the Department of Public Safety. I am testifying on behalf of Maine Department of Public Safety and Maine EMS in support of LD 1653, *“Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Chapter 124: Emergency Medical Services Personnel Reporting Rule, a Late-filed Major Substantive Rule of the Department of Health and Human Services, Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention.”*

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in the State of Maine, Maine EMS and Maine CDC identified a need to be able to identify EMS clinicians and emergency medical dispatchers throughout the state that were affected by the virus. This was prudent to understand the impacts on staffing and our system’s capacity to maintain continued response to medical emergencies, COVID-19-related and not, throughout the state. This tool, as implemented, is able to capture

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information about EMS clinicians and emergency medical dispatchers that initiate quarantine, complete quarantine, exhibit signs/symptoms consistent with an infectious disease, are tested for the disease, confirmed positive cases of the disease, those admitted to the hospital, deaths, and those who returned to work. The rules language was developed collaboratively to ensure that the provision could be used again in the future should we be faced with another public health emergency of similar magnitude.

Since its implementation in April of 2020, there have been reports regarding 507 different EMS clinicians and emergency medical dispatchers that were affected by COVID-19. This doesn't mean that all 507 individuals developed COVID-19 but that they were affected in some way – either exposed, developed signs/symptoms, completed quarantine, were tested, had a positive test result, and/or returned to work.

We appreciate your time and consideration of this bill and we ask that you support this legislation by voting ought to pass. I am more than happy to answer any questions that you may have at this time, but please feel free to reach out to me anytime if there is any additional information I can offer you and/or the Committee.

Thank you.