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Testimony of the
Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention
Department of Health and Human Services

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

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)

Sponsored by: Representative Meyer
Hearing Date: May 11, 2021 2pm

Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer, and members, Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, my name is Tera Pare, and I am the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention's Policy and Compliance Manager. I am here today to provide testimony on behalf of the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC) and will be speaking 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).

This Resolve provides for the legislative review of 10-144 CMR chapter 124: Emergency Medical Services Personnel Reporting Rule, a major substantive rule of the Department of Health and Human Services, Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, that was filed outside the legislative rule acceptance period. Rule Chapter 124 permanently establishes requirements for emergency medical service (EMS) organizations and emergency medical dispatch (EMD) centers to monitor and report information about the status of EMS personnel who are absent from duty during an extreme public health emergency, as a result of their exposure or potential exposure to a notifiable disease or condition. Reporting requirements are consistent with the rule, adopted on an emergency basis on April 22, 2020, as well as the subsequent provisionally adopted rule before this committee.

The Department is authorized to implement rules related to addressing any shortage of health care workers. (22 MRS § 820(1)(C)). The final adoption of this rule will assist with state-wide emergency preparedness and responsiveness, providing for the continued reporting and surveillance of the capacity of Maine's emergency medical systems, specifically emergency medical service responders, medical service transporters and dispatchers licensed by Maine Bureau of Emergency Medical Services (Maine EMS). Since the implementation of reporting requirements, beginning in April of 2020, there have been reports regarding 507 different EMS personnel and emergency medical dispatchers who were affected by COVID-19. This result 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. If approved by the Legislature, EMS organizations and EMD centers will be responsible for continuing to report certain information related to an employee's absence, ensuring the Department's continued coordination and integration of activities and resources related to emergency

medical services, to inform the overall planning, evaluation, coordination, facilitation and operations of an effective comprehensive statewide emergency medical services system.

In summary, the Maine CDC supports LD 1653 and respectfully recommends this Resolve ought to pass to allow for the final adoption of the agency's major substantive rule, making permanent the electronic reporting requirements introduced by emergency rule on April 22, 2020. Accurate and reliable statewide data is essential for coordinating with municipal localities, other State offices, federal emergency management agencies and healthcare systems across the State, in order to prepare for and respond to public health emergency needs. Information collected under this rule is to be used strictly for public health purposes, serving to inform decisions regarding EMS workforce capacity as a key element of a comprehensive and effective emergency medical services system that ensures optimal patient care.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter and for the opportunity to provide testimony today. The Maine CDC will be available to participate in the work session and address any questions or requests from the Committee.