

Senate Health and Human Services Committee

Sophie Walsh 271-3469

SB 133-FN, relative to the designation of emergency medical services performed by ambulance service providers as essential services.

Hearing Date: February 12, 2025

Time Opened: 9:06 a.m.

Time Closed: 9:12 a.m.

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Rochefort, Avard, Birdsell and Prentiss

Members of the Committee Absent: Senator Long

Bill Analysis: This bill provides that ambulance service providers are essential service providers for purposes of emergency management at the state and local level.

Sponsors:

Sen. McGough

Sen. Lang

Sen. Murphy

Sen. Gannon

Sen. Prentiss

Sen. Pearl

Rep. Miles

Rep. Aures

Rep. Proulx

Rep. Moffett

Who supports the bill: Sen. McGough, Sen. Pearl, Sen. Murphy, Sen. Gannon, Keith Wilding (NHTI Paramedics), Everett King (NHTI Paramedics), James Beaudoin (NHTI Paramedics & Gilmanton Fire), Michael Olivero (NHTI Paramedics), Cylan Gosselin (NHTI Paramedic Emergency Medicine & Keene Fire), Kirkland Schramm (NHTI Paramedic Emergency Medicine), Margot Kratzenberg (NHTI Paramedics), Cole Boggis (NHTI Paramedics), Jordan Lippmeier (NHTI Paramedics), Maya Keller (NHTI Paramedics), Nolan Haggart (NHTI Paramedics), Ed Walker (NH Fire Chiefs), Eric Schelberg (Milford Ambulance), Gordon Springate, and Remy Daigler.

Who opposes the bill: Lyn Tripp

Who is neutral on the bill: No one.

Summary of testimony presented:

Senator Tim McGough, Senate District 11

- Senator McGough stated that he has previously worked for Rockingham Ambulance.
- This is a simple housekeeping bill.

- In the past, we have defined essential services and the term “first responder” was chosen.
- While this is accurate for a large majority of cases, systems are designed differently across the state and nation. In some cases, law enforcement or firefighters are the first to respond. In many systems, ambulances are the first to respond, especially in tiered systems or when volunteers are responding. It could also be other law enforcement, such as sheriffs or the State Police.
- Current statute does not include specific language for ambulance service providers. This bill will add ambulance service provider language to the list of essential services.
- This was suggested to Senator McGough by an expert EMS educator.
- Other states have adopted this change, including Texas, Montana, and Arizona. The comprehensive list is included in written testimony submitted to the committee.
- Senator McGough referenced East Palestine, Ohio and explained that in such situations, federal law enforcement and other agencies will look to see what essential services are defined as in statute. Ambulance service providers need to be included in that list for these types of situations.

Keith Wilding, NHTI Paramedic Emergency Medicine Program

- Mr. Wilding stated that he has been a paramedic for twenty-five years and is the Department Chair for the NHTI Emergency Medicine Program.
- Ambulance-based EMS is not necessarily listed as an essential service within New Hampshire statute.
- It does recognize them as first responders, but this categorization is vague.
- The majority of ambulance services in New Hampshire are fire-based. However, some are private ambulances that work multiple 9-1-1 systems. Those are not necessarily covered in the current statute.
- Mr. Wilding explained that he had a discussion with Senator McGough about clarifying this and listing ambulance responders as an essential service.