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**Testimony in Support of LD 1891 (“An Act to Continue Supporting Safe Drinking Water for Maine Families”)**

**J. Andrew Cashman on behalf of the Maine Association of REALTORS®**

**February 2, 2022**

Senator Daughtry, Representative Sylvester and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing, my name is Andy Cashman. I am a Partner at Preti Flaherty and I am here on behalf of my client, the Maine Association of REALTORS®, which is a professional trade association with over 6,200 members statewide. Our members represent both buyers and sellers and are involved in both residential and commercial transactions. Our membership also includes affiliates, which are those professionals involved in real estate transactions, such as bankers, closing agents, title agents, appraisers, building inspectors, surveyors, etc. The Maine Association is a member of the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR) which is the largest trade association in the nation.

The Maine Association of REALTORS® supports LD 1891. If passed, the bill provides one-time funding for the treatment of contaminated private drinking water wells. Specifically, it directs Maine State Housing Authority (MSHA) to provide abatement grants to single-family homeowners or landlords with contaminated private well water.

We support this initiative because well water can become contaminated due to a variety of factors that can occur at any time. We note that while the title of Section 1 states “[g]rants for well water abatement” the text of Section 1 does not specify that the purpose of the grant is to offset the cost of abatement. For this reason, we suggest including language to specify abatement as the purpose of the grant. Additionally, it may be helpful to empower MSHA to do rulemaking to specify eligibility for the grants and what abatement is covered.

With this amendment, we urge you to vote Ought to Pass on LD 1891. Thank you for your time and consideration