



**Maine Unitarian Universalist
State Advocacy Network**
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President Jackson, Speaker Talbot Ross and members of the Committee on Appropriations & Financial Affairs

My name is Lynn Ellis and I live in Brunswick. I would like to express my deepest gratitude for your leadership and for bringing this critical bill back again for a vote.

I speak in support of LD3, particularly Part A, that will allocate funds for emergency housing to prevent people from experiencing homelessness during the winter months and to assist low- income Mainers struggling to pay for heating.

I speak as a member of the Maine Unitarian Universalist State Advocacy Network. As Unitarian Universalists we affirm the worth and dignity of all people, and promote justice, equity, and compassion in human relations. Part of our mission is to work together and in collaboration with others to promote the health and wellbeing of all Mainers.

As I prepared this testimony I was reminded of a time while working as a hospice social worker, when I was referred to the home of a woman dying of metastatic breast cancer. Often my job included assisting with preparing advance directives; gathering family members to say their goodbyes. When I entered the modest double wide mobile home the first thing I noticed was how cold it was. I spoke with the woman's husband who led me to a small side room where his wife was lying in a hospital bed. Barely 90 pounds, she was wearing a light cardigan covered by a thin blanket. On her head sat a stocking cap. I asked them about the temperature. The husband said "we need to keep the heat down to conserve usage. We can only afford 100 gallons at a time and it doesn't last long. Since my wife fell ill and hasn't been able to work we don't always have enough money." This couple were in their early 70s. I spent some time with her and she asked me not to worry; that she would be fine as she lay shivering. I was able to access community resources and get 100 gallons of fuel delivered. At least for a time she would be a bit warmer in her dying days.

I will never forget this nor the many other stories we hear these days. Evictions are on the rise Funds for emergency housing in motels housing asylum seekers is running out and the cost of heating a home continues to rise. That, in addition to the cost of groceries puts many more Mainers at risk of homelessness and threatens their lives. I was born and raised in Maine. I was fortunate to have a home to go to every day where I felt safe and comfortable. I was warm and never went hungry. I wish this for every single person in my home state. Please vote to pass this emergency bill and provide the means for surviving a cold winter in Maine. Thank you.

Lynn S. Ellis
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Co-Chair of HealthCare Issue Group/MUUSAN