

Suzy Young
Peer Workforce Navigator at Food AND Medicine
LD 3

President Troy Jackson, Speaker Rachel Talbot Ross and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs.

My name is Suzy Young and I am the Peer Workforce Navigator at Food AND Medicine in Brewer. I work with community members every day, from young families to the elderly, that are worried about whether they will make it through the cold winter months. Those are the very same people many of you talked to while knocking on doors in the fall and I am sure this comes as no surprise to anyone. Many of them are choosing between heating oil and other basic needs to survive and be the valuable members of their community that they are.

Growing up in a small town in Maine as the daughter of a Fire Chief, I am also concerned about the community members well being. If they can't afford to purchase heating oil to properly heat their homes, my concern is they may use makeshift heating sources that could lead to either carbon monoxide poisoning or setting their residence on fire. This could lead to more than one dwelling burning and displacing one or many from their homes out into an already established housing crisis here in Maine. I know this scenario to be true as in April 1983, my grandmother lost her life in a house fire after running out of heating oil in the middle of the night and did just that, using a makeshift heating source. Mainers are resilient and they are going to do what they need to do to survive.

Although LD 3 isn't a permanent solution, it would give many Maine residents a hand up to be safe this winter.

I urge you to pass LD3 and ensure that it goes into effect as quickly as possible.