

Liz Eisele McLellan
Westbrook Community Housing Coalition
LD 3

Thank you for holding this Public Hearing.

We are a group of community members, faith leaders, school and city representatives, and nonprofit organizations looking to help ease the burden of becoming unhoused for our friends and neighbors. Partnering with One Westbrook, we have organized as the Westbrook Community Housing Coalition and have been working together to address the housing crisis within Westbrook.

The impact of losing the ERA funding at the onset of winter has exacerbated the current housing situation. As we head into a Maine winter, we are fearful for Mainers who live paycheck to paycheck or have already found themselves out in the cold. As the temperatures drop, and oil and electricity prices soar, there is no doubt that people will suffer.

In Westbrook, we have 85 students (and their families) that are unhoused and 218 families that have already lost their ERA funding. These numbers do not include unhoused individuals who do not have children in the school system and are living in their cars or on the streets. In surrounding towns, there are 700 families that are losing their ERA funding at the end of the month.

We are trying to stem a tsunami in the middle of a nor'easter. We encounter obstacles at every turn. Even when we know who to send someone to, they do not have enough resources to help. We also have a lot of new Mainers living in Westbrook, many who are not yet eligible to work, who need to get through the winter.

The challenges are many, but they can be faced together. Emerging from the current crisis is going to take all of us. It cannot be put on individuals, volunteers and organizations. We need support and financing from the State of Maine. Our friends and neighbors, our fellow Mainers, need your help to survive the winter.

Please listen to these stories and testimonies with compassion. You have the ability and the budget to help the people in Maine that need it most. Do the right thing.

Westbrook Community Housing Coalition

Amanda Atkinson Lewis
Amy Grommes Pulaski
Andre Davis
Beatrice Mucyo
Belinda Kande
Bob Lowell
Charlie Gauvin
Chris LaRoche
Christophor Gilbert
Christine Manegabe
Claude Rwaganje
Dacoda Maddalone
Dan Glover
David Morse
Denise Quint
Deqa Dhalac
Grayson Lookner
Greg Post
Harrison Deah
Heather Latham
James Devine
Jen Munro
Jerre Bryant
Jessica Moninski
Jo Freedman
John Corbin
Joy Knight
Karen Indorf
Katie Garrity
Kevin Lambertson
Kristin Styles

Kristina Yurko
Leslie Foley
Linda Anderson
Liz Blackwell-Moore
Liz Eisele McLellan
Liz Eisele McLellan
Lucas Schrage
Madeleine R. Saucier
Mardochee Mbongi
Martha Lavoilet
Megan Perry
Melissa Esty
Michael Foley
Michael Shaughnessy
Michelle Lamm
Mike Miles
Mufalo Chitam
Natalie Lonstein
Nsiona Nguizani
Odilia Silveira-Harmon
Pasteur Samuel Luzingu
Pastor Ken MacLeod
Peter Lancia
Placid Mowa
Prosper Lohomboli
Rachel P. Riendeau
Regina Clement
Robin Talbot
Rod Mahoua
Ruben Torres
Scott Dupee
Scott Linscott
Solange Carpenter
Solange Ngero
Spencer Barton
Steve Goldberg
Sue Salisbury
Terry Patten
Tobin Williamson
Tyler Norod
Victoria Morales
Zoe Sahloul