



Town of Brunswick, Maine

INCORPORATED 1739

TOWN COUNCIL

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SUBMITTED VIA LEGISLATIVE PORTAL

December 21, 2022

Members of the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs
Maine State Legislature
Augusta, ME 04333

Re: LD 3 - An Act to Establish the Winter Energy Relief Payment Program to Aid Residents with High Heating Costs and to Finalize the COVID Pandemic Relief Payment Program

Dear Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of the Brunswick Town Council, which voted unanimously to send this communication expressing our support for the enactment of LD 3.

Mainers across our state, and many of our friends and neighbors in Brunswick, are facing the crushing cost of heating their homes. Many are also facing the consequences of the housing crisis, with costs rising beyond their reach. Existing programs designed to help provide heat and shelter are inadequate to address the enormous needs we are seeing. One of these programs, the federally funded Emergency Rental Assistance program, will not be funded past the end of December.

General Assistance, the locally administered program that provides emergency relief to our most vulnerable residents, is not designed to address the heating and housing needs of the magnitude we are now witnessing. Our General Assistance administrator reports that the number of inquiries and applications has never been greater. This is echoed by our many community partners, and social service agencies.

LD 3 is an emergency bill that, if enacted, would provide immediate, desperately needed, relief to thousands of Mainers. Clearly, by any definition, the current heating and housing crisis, presenting during the coldest months of the year, is an emergency, demanding immediate action. The funding proposed in LD 3 would provide the measure of relief the heating and housing crisis demands. Our friends and neighbors need help now. We urge you to support enactment of LD 3.

Respectfully,

James Mason
Chair, Brunswick Town Council

Cc: Town Council, Town Manager
Senator Daughtry, Representatives Ankeles, Arford, and Golek