

SENATOR

IT'S

COLD

OUTSIDE

& INSIDE

Public Hearing Today 1pm

Sign up by 12:30pm

\$ for HEAT & HOUSING!

Tax the 1%, Use some Savings, Borrow at low rates

FMI: <https://www.mainelegislature.org/testimony/>

Aa2 AA
Ratings

\$600M
surplus
last year

BUDGET SURPLUS



Moody's
STANDARD
& POOR'S

No Tax on
Biz Serv
\$520M
Loss

Rainy
Day Fund

\$900M

Elizabeth Capone-Newton
Portland
LD 3

-There is enough money to meet everyone's basic needs. Public documents show that the State of Maine has many sources of income and funding underutilized:

a) taxes not collected on the wealthiest individuals and businesses costs hundreds of millions per year in lost income to the State, and therefore lost services to the People of Maine. We should collect more from those we have the ability to pay, and less from those struggling - and most of the people in Maine are struggling in some form.

b) \$900,000,000 or \$900 million sits in the state's Stabilization or "rainy day" fund - let's call this a COLD DAY fund and get to spending some of it to keep our people with and without homes WARM;

c) the State of Maine spent \$600,000,000 or \$600 million LESS than it collected for income or revenue - ran a "surplus" while half or more of the population of our people suffers economically, without the food, housing, transit, adequate schooling, and health care that we all need and deserve, our legislators are choosing not to spend money that Maine has in its hands - that's not right;

d) like any large business or large organization or person with assets (resources we own), Maine is in a great position to borrow money at low interest rates to fund the types of investments in our communities that we all deserve. The State of Maine is rated well as a responsible borrower, and that will still be true even if we spend some "rainy day" funds and do not run such a high budget "surplus".

In summary, we can afford to collect more from those with more and spend it to prevent human suffering, collect less from those with less, spend some savings on important things, and borrow the rest for the common good of us all.

-Our suffering is real, and it hurts. We deserve to be partners in this democracy - we have a right to know about the money being kept from us while we struggle so hard. Our stories are sacred. They are not for highlighting only when it is convenient to politicians or the media, and then forgetting about the rest of the year. [Share a story if you want -- including a story about a super rich person or super rich business who has so much extra, or has the ability to borrow giant amounts of money and buy giant amounts of property. Contrast it with how the people we love live, if you want. Never share a story of suffering if it doesn't feel right in your gut.] We are learning that our suffering is not our fault. We are tired of the excesses of the rich being considered normal and even something to aspire to, while it is implied that we created our own problems. Personal failings are in the eye of the beholder - why are we not talking about the personal failing of legislators who lack the courage to invest in keeping Mainers warm and fed and housed? Why are we not talking about the personal failing of the super rich who "buy off" the legislators with their campaign donations, or the rich who own the media and control the narrative to divide us from each other? In most religions and moral codes, it is a grave personal failing to be greedy and divisive. We want the meek to inherit the earth now, while we are still alive.

-We will want to see amendments to this bill. Why are we investing so little money for heat and housing with this bill? Why aren't we helping the 75% of Mainers who need it, according to their relative need? We do not want to be pitted against our neighbors and scapegoated by them. Help them too, so they do not become jealous or vengeful towards us. Why aren't we investing in short-term fixes AND long-term, dignified solutions to lack of housing at the same time? How can we help renters buy their homes? How can we help renters be able to get Efficiency Maine energy saving benefits so that our rent or energy costs can be lower? Where is our real, bold plan to stop homelessness, to stop relying on the streets and warming centers and shelters -- our people need permanent housing that we can call our own. We want to be partners with you in making these solutions - not the paid lobbyists, not the elite party networks. Look to us for the solutions, because we live in, with, and through these problems everyday. We know best, especially if you get honest with us, the public,

about understanding the money (both cash and borrowing potential) that the State of Maine is sitting on. Where there's a will, there's a way. No one knows that better than those of us who suffer everyday. With our creativity and skill at penny pinching (we can't afford to waste resources!), all those dollars could be invested very, very well.