

To the Honorable Members of the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee:

I am writing in support of LD3: 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.

My husband and I live in Westbrook, Maine. We own our home and thankfully are not at risk of a landlord suddenly increasing our rent or telling us we have to move within a month. Looking back over our life, we can remember a time when one of us was unemployed and an extended family member paid our home mortgage for a year. Most people do not have the financial support we had nor do they have the personal reserves to deal with periods of unemployment, fluctuating rent and energy costs. We are all subject to forces beyond our control and my require help from government programs.

To be without shelter in Maine in the winter with very limited housing available and homeless shelters strained or full is a cruel and deadly situation. We would not allow that for our worst criminal offenders, and yet families with children are facing the prospect.

I implore you to swiftly pass LD3. Legislation is a moral statement. I'd like to believe we care about the people living within our state and will work together to help those in crisis.