

CrossWay LLC

#1 Water Street, Newport, Maine 04953

(207)368-6221

emergencies (207)487-3680

crosswayrentals@gmail.com

February 1, 2023

To: Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee

Re: Opposition of LD 45: An Act to Prevent Retaliatory Evictions

Dear Valuable Representatives of the People of Maine:

I am writing as a person with a small investment in rental property in opposition of LD 45: An Act to Prevent Retaliatory Evictions. Although my income is “passive” I take it very seriously to provide safe and clean rental housing. I keep all my interactions in writing with tenants and I ask them to do the same to protect themselves as well as me. The overall renters in Maine, just like the general populace, are wonderful and honest people looking to live their best life.

Unfortunately, there are rare times when we have had to ask people to move from our units. Typically this stems from specific incidents that can not always fit smoothly into one category or another of the rental agreement but generally constitute creating an environment that disrupts other residents, neighbors, maintenance or care of the unit and/or building, and overall an unwillingness to communicate and uphold the spirit of the rental agreement. It seems that the last few years personally, and theoretically when talking with landlords, that when I present an Infraction Notice (let’s say for example, failure to pick up after their dog) the tenants begin to immediately be “building their case” by bringing items to my attention (like: my neighbor does x,y,z; I had to leave in order to get to work to pay my rent on time, I picked it up within 24 hours and btw my sink sprayer hasn’t worked for over a month). There is an uncomfortable shift taking place in landlord/tenant relations that becomes more and more strained and “tit for tat” when everyone feels they need to cover their bases.

For an eviction to actually make it to the point of being in front of judge many days and specific legal measures must be taken. This process is NOT instantaneous and certainly allows for significant opportunity for any number of solutions other than the need for a specific bill like LD 45 that ties the hands of a Judge. Bills that prevent discrimination are integral to the duties of our elected officials. Retaliatory defenses have a long and important history that is clearly outlined in statute. I am very concerned that bills that foster this air of “tit for tat” erodes the important lines of communication and need for occasional mediation that preserves good landlord/tenant relations. I am concerned that LD 45 would limit a judges ability to hear the full and thorough accusations and defenses and consider the full evidence of each individual situation when asked to be hear PROPERLY (assertions of rights made **prior** to eviction / ask to move notice).

Please vote no on LD 45 as it is written. Thank you for your consideration.

Donna E. Hodges

Donna Hodges
Newport
LD 45

Please OPPOSE LD 45 and support bills that encourage greater mediation and communication BEFORE eviction hearings.