



Maine Municipal Association

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Testimony of the Maine Municipal Association

In Opposition To

LD 207 -An Act to Transfer Responsibility for Administering the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code from the Department of Public Safety, Office of the State Fire Marshall to the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation

March 20, 2023

Sen. Beebe-Center, Rep. Salisbury and distinguished members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee, my name is Rebecca Graham, and I providing testimony, in opposition to LD 207, *An Act to Transfer Responsibility for Administering the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code from the Department of Public Safety, Office of the State Fire Marshall to the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation*, on behalf of the Maine Municipal Association, which represents the interests of municipal government before the Legislature. The positions of the Association are established by our 70-member Legislative Policy Committee (LPC), who are elected by the councils and selectboards of municipalities in each of Maine's 35 Senate districts.

Many of the officials on our LPC where many hats include that of Code Enforcement Officer for their towns and cities. Since the training has left the Department of Economic and Community Development and has been placed with the Fire Marshalls office, Code Enforcement Officers feel better supported and more closely aligned with the life safety specialties that interest most closely with their roles. Previously the program was understaffed, underfunded and not a priority for DECD to promote investing greater budget resources into. This bill seems to be an attempt to again disrupt the program and make it harder to pursue future investment and expertise to support code enforcement activity.

Officials believe moving this complex multi-discipline certification role out of the Fire Marshall's office will again disrupt their technical support programs, and further make communication between all of the regulatory requirements to maintain their professional certification problematic. There is no compelling reason why the program should be removed from its current operations, though they do support attempts to collect greater revenue for its support and expansion. Life safety codes are the most important regulations that code enforcement officers must review and ensure and there is no nexus between that priority and the proposal to place the program into DAFS,

Officials ask that you keep the current program within the Department of Public Safety and review ways to support code enforcement training more robustly, not disrupt it again.