



Testimony of Pamela Ward of the Maine Bankers Association in  
Support of  
LD 1015

### RESOLVE, ESTABLISHING THE COMMISSION TO STUDY THE FORECLOSURE PROCESS

Good morning, members of the judiciary committee. My name is Pam Ward. I live in Houlton and I'm Vice President of credit control department for Katahdin Trust Company. I have been in banking for over 40 years and handle the collections and foreclosures for Katahdin Trust. I am here today to testify in support of LD 1015.

I am going to touch on the Housing in Maine. You have all seen them as you are strolling through neighborhoods in your communities. We've all seen them, every town has them. They are foreclosure properties that are either not kept up, or abandoned. These properties are in the **long foreclosure process**. Because of the lengthy time for foreclosure, these properties are in many cases, in terrible shape. Chances are the lawns haven't been mowed, the maintenance hasn't been kept up, customers/renters may have moved out and have not let anyone know, therefore, the pipes may have frozen, or the property not secured. There might even be squatters inhabiting the building.

As we all know, we have a shortage of housing in the State of Maine. If the foreclosure time could be shortened and the properties sold in a quicker manner, there would be more housing in the State of Maine. These properties would have less time to deteriorate, and be more likely to have a higher salability. In Maine there is a very small threshold to sell properties. I'm in northern Maine which we have an even shorter time frame. So it is essential that the time for foreclosure be shortened.

The cost to keep these houses maintained by the bank is very costly as well. If we have to keep the lawns mowed, the driveways plowed, the property cleaned out, Insurance, and at times, maintenance on frozen pipes, that the banks will probably never recover the cost. Over a period of a year or two or even more, this can add up.

Then you have the eviction time, it takes a Sheriff many attempts to serve the person. The customers are given a period of time to vacate the property, if they don't they are again visited by the Sheriff. If they don't evict on their own, then they are then removed by the Sheriff, this all takes time and money on the banks.

So in my wrap up, we are in need of an overhaul of our foreclosure timeframe here in Maine. The commission needs to create a shorter foreclosure process for the banks. I want to thank you for the opportunity to participate in this matter.

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