

Julia Gray
Orland
LD 912

Chair Rotundo, Chair Sachs, and honorable members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of LD 912.

Maine's historic buildings are an irreplaceable part of our civic infrastructure. They are often part of a community's identity, a highly visible symbol of local history, places of memory that span generations. They are also an essential part of a sustainable and resilient future for our communities. Maintaining and perhaps upgrading historic community buildings, when done well, has a much lower carbon footprint than most new buildings – a large scale application of reduce, reuse, recycle. However, the up-front costs to do this can be high, often beyond the reach of communities that are also struggling to maintain roads, sewer and water systems, public works garages, emergency services, and the like. The financial resources provided by LD219 could make the difference!

Where I work in Castine, historic public buildings include the town hall, the school, the library, the historical society, the Wilson Museum, and Maine Maritime Academy. In Orland, where I live, the historical society is located in the old town hall and is doing its best to maintain the structure with an all-volunteer staff and small budget. Both communities would see benefits from this bill, and in both communities, the work to maintain and update these historic public buildings would employ a wide variety of local craftspeople and their crews.

I urge the committee's support of LD 912.

Thank you,
Julia Gray, Orland
Executive Director, Wilson Museum, Castine