

Christine Bennett
Eliot, ME

Testimony in Support of LD 1493
An Act to Increase Affordable Housing by Expanding Tax Increment Financing

Representative Perry and distinguished members of the Committee on Taxation, my name is Christine Bennett, I am a member of the Eliot Planning Board and co-chair of the Eliot Comprehensive Plan Update Committee.

I am writing in strong support of LD 1493 because it would provide a valuable tool for municipalities to address the housing crisis facing our state and nation, locally.

In particulate, the creation of Pine Tree Housing Zone program would allow municipalities to go beyond modifying land use regulations regarding housing to address housing supply and provide a meaningful tool to address affordability.

The Town of Eliot has been participating in the Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission's Joint Land Use Study between the Town of Kittery and Portsmouth Naval Shipyard (PNSY). This project "incorporates a team approach to define compatibility issues that could impede either military operations or continued regional growth"¹. This multi-year project has been identifying and formulating solutions to issues such as adequate workforce housing, regional transportation networks, resiliency of coastal development and developing guidelines and infrastructure investments to guide compatible community development.

The Town of Eliot currently has a TIFF zone which straddles the major arterial Route 236, used by 8,000+ Portsmouth Naval Shipyard workers everyday as they increasingly have to commute further and further away from where they work. PSNY is slated to hire approximately 1,600 more workers in the next year.

Thirty years ago, a majority of Shipyard workers lived in Kittery and communities adjacent to Kittery. Today, the majority of these workers commute 20-40 miles inland to where they can find affordable housing.

LD 1493 would allow towns like Eliot to use tax increment financing to provide meaningful solutions to regional issues facing both the public and private sectors.

I thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully yours,
Christine Bennett

¹ Southern Maine Planning & Development Commission, Special Projects, [JLUS](#)