

City of Portland | City Council

Kate Snyder, *Mayor*



To: Joint Standing Committee On Taxation
From: Mayor Kate Snyder, City of Portland
Date: 5/9/2023
Re: LD 1810

Testimony in support of LD 1810
“An Act to Expand the Maine Historic Rehabilitation Credit and
Establish a Weatherization Tax Credit”

Senator Grohoski, Representative Perry, and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Taxation:

I write to you on behalf of the City of Portland’s Legislative/Nominating Committee in support of LD 1810.

The preservation and rehabilitation of significant and beloved historic buildings across Portland has been an important goal of the city since the establishment of the local preservation ordinance in 1990. Existing rehabilitation tax credit programs have been powerful tools in achieving those goals by fueling significant projects, such as the conversion of Mercy Hospital and Sisters of Mercy Motherhouse to housing. In many instances, these projects have been paired with the creation of affordable housing units.

Statewide, historic tax credit programs have helped support hundreds of millions of dollars in construction, rehabilitation, and investment in Maine and Maine jobs. The proposed bill would support a number of stated goals in Portland’s Comprehensive Plan, including encouraging investment in historic structures, improved accessibility, improved energy efficiency, climate change adaptation, and promoting sustainability by supporting rehabilitation of our existing housing stock. In particular, we appreciate the attention that has been given to ensuring that this new program would pair with existing financial incentives, such as Efficiency Maine’s programs for weatherization.

Additionally, LD 1810 would help realize the potential of the combination of Historic Preservation and affordable housing, both increasing support for large projects and creating incentives for smaller-scale affordable housing in owner-occupied historic structures. Providing incentives for the creative use of our existing building stock is one crucial component of removing obstacles to housing creation.

We also expect that the bill will provide expanded and new incentives across Portland by supporting property owners in maintaining and retaining their homes.

This is a critical measure that will help to ensure vulnerable individuals and families have access to the basic necessities they need to survive and thrive. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.