

Les Fossel
Restoration Resources
LD 1810

Good afternoon Senate Chair Grohoski , House Chair Perry and the honored members of the Joint Committee on Taxation. My name is Les Fossel and I am a recovering legislator, having served in the 123rd and 124th Legislatures. I was involved in both writing the original legislation and the revisions when I served in the Legislature I am also an old Fossel. I have 48 years of experience as a historic house contractor with 18 employees and over 150 years of combined experience.

I have managed to stay in business and I have served on numerous non-profit boards, often as treasurer because I know how to be efficient and economical. It is why in the Legislature my MERI score was always among the very highest.

I am in favor of LD 1810 because I think it will benefit both Maine's quality of life and our economy.

Just as some carpenters think they can solve any problem with a hammer, some legislators think they can solve any problem with a law. This is simply not true. In the real world, the best we can do is to make things a little better, provide a little more opportunity for Mainers and help Maine communities their potential, without creating collateral problems. This bill does that.

Here are some changes that I think you should consider:

*The 5% boost should include both the elderly and long term residents. We should use our taxation policies to support Maine communities. While the current program raises property values, it also raises the cost of work for homeowners in historic districts who have not been able to compensate these costs with tax credits.

*The existing tax credits require an enormous amount of paperwork to apply. The process for homeowners either needs to be radically simplified, or a way to provide assistance needs to be part of the bill.

*Before you pass any legislation, I suggest you ask what was once known as the "Fossel" question from my legislative days: "Has any other jurisdiction passed such a law? If so, can we learn from their experience? If not, I would be very cautious, since there could be multiple unforeseen problems created.

I would be happy to attend the work session for this bill, since I probably know more about this subject from a variety of points of view than almost anyone else you could name.

I've attached a link to a short documentary that illuminates my position

<https://vimeo.com/815559764> password: restoration3

Thank you.

Les Fossel