

Toni Kemmerle
Brunswick
LD 1844

To Chair Senator Teresa Pierce and Chair Representative Traci Grere,
My name is Toni Kemmerle, and I am testifying on behalf of myself and my community in support of this legislation. I appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of LD1844, An Act to Support Emergency Housing Facility Construction, Renovation and Acquisition Statewide by Creating a Matching Grant Program, which would greatly improve the quality of life for many Mainers statewide. I live in Brunswick where the number of people experiencing homelessness is large and the need for emergency shelter remains. I support emergency shelter organizations across the state and support any expansion of their services and programs to members of my community that are in need. Housing organizations around the state would be able to serve more people experiencing homelessness in their local communities if the state rewarded their fundraising and expansion efforts with a State-funded matching program. The only emergency housing provider for my town and the southern midcoast region is Tedford Housing. Last year, Tedford served over 550 people facing housing insecurity and will be able to serve significantly more of our neighbors if this bill passes. Tedford has a shovel ready project for a new facility and is in the process of raising funds. This bill offers the possibility of a funding source that would speed up the construction of the new Tedford facility that will serve people experiencing housing insecurity or outright homelessness throughout the entire southern midcoast region. Nobody plans to become homeless. When a family or individual's life stability is threatened by the financial impact of a medical emergency, divorce, death of a wage earner, or loss of job, emergency housing is a key tool in maintaining their stability and self-sufficiency. Please vote Ought to Pass on LD1844 so that Maine's emergency shelters can do their part in building a healthy, productive populace. Thank you for your consideration.