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LD 1710

I oppose LD 1710 because forcing private landlords to solve the housing crisis is far from the solution. I realize homelessness is a real problem here and everyone is trying to put their spin on how to resolve it. This is not the answer. I own and manage 72 units in Maine, mostly in the Bangor/Brewer area. Many of my tenants are low income and several have vouchers, but that number has decreased over the years due to the extra issues involved. Several of my current tenants struggle with mental health issues and drug problems. I hold a bachelor's degree in psychology and human development which has helped me to manage my tenants who are in crisis, but even that falls short at times. I currently house several people who have severe mental illness and require a lot of my time and energy. I have had people tell me to evict them because of safety concerns as well as making other tenants uncomfortable, but my response is "Where would they go?" I have tried numerous avenues to get help for these individuals and come up short. I'm aware that not all low-income individuals have mental health or drug issues, but in my experience, that number is significantly higher in that population. There is an extreme shortage of services for individuals who are struggling and that is what the focus needs to be instead of forcing landlords to bear the burden of this simply because our business is in housing. Instead of tying the hands of the landlords, how about finding a way to help them manage these tenants. It isn't just about money for the majority of us. It involves so much more than a voucher and a placement.