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**Testimony in Opposition to LD 1929
("An Act to Protect Consumers by Licensing Home Building Contractors")**

J. Andrew Cashman on behalf of the Maine Association of REALTORS®

May 23, 2023

Senator Curry, Representative Roberts and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business my name is Andy Cashman. I am the Founder of Resolve Government Relations, and we represent the Maine Association of REALTORS®, a professional trade association established in 1936 with over 6,500 members statewide. REALTORS® grow Maine's economy and build Maine communities. Our members represent buyers and sellers involved in both residential and commercial real estate transactions. Our membership also includes industry affiliates, such as lenders, closing agents, title agents, appraisers, building inspectors, surveyors, etc. The Maine Association is chartered by the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR), the largest trade association in the country.

The Maine Association of REALTORS® opposes LD 1929 and its amendment. The bill would repeal the existing law on home construction contracts and add new arbitrary contract requirements as well as require building contractor licensing.

Requiring building contractor licensing at this time would increase operating expenses and the cost of construction when we currently are facing a housing shortage and a dearth of contractors. The fundamental cause of the current housing problem is a lack of supply. We do not have enough housing in Maine and need to build more – either through development or by modifying existing structures. We need contractors to accomplish this. Code enforcement officers and other industry partners currently ensure that work is in compliance, so we do not see an imminent public safety issue that needs licensing to correct. Adding a licensing requirement would only exacerbate the housing shortage by forcing good contractors out of the industry or posing as a deterrent to entry for some.

It is also important to consider the potential for increased costs associated with adding licensure to the contractor industry. Furthermore, the timing of these bills is troubling: Maine residents and businesses are still hurting financially, and this is not the time to burden our citizens with higher expenses.

For these reasons, we urge you to vote Ought Not to Pass on LD 1929. Thank you for your time and consideration.



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