

May 23, 2023

Dear Committee Members,

This letter supports LD# 1931, “An Act to Foster Stable and Affordable Home Ownership in Mobile Home Parks by Amending the Laws Relating to the Sale of Mobile Home Parks”.

Maine is facing an unprecedented lack of affordable housing.

Maine has approximately 714 manufactured housing communities (MHCs). These communities are home to approximately 40,000 Maine residents, where people own their home but not the land their home sits on. These homeowners face unique vulnerabilities and the risk of displacement when an MHC is closed for redevelopment or sold to an equity-driven investor. The risk of displacement is even more threatening when residents learn mobile homes are not really mobile – studies show 80% of manufactured homes are never moved once sited – and costs for transporting range from \$10,000 - \$20,000 if a homeowner can even find a site to bring the home to.

Here are a few issues facing MHC residents in Maine:

- No effective notice at the time of an MHC sale;
- Limited options to match a sale offer from a third party;
- No voice in community rules;
- No voice in lot rent increases;
- It is cost-prohibitive to move a manufactured home; estimates range from \$10,000 - \$20,000, making residents of MHCs “captive” tenants to the landowner.
- No security via long-term land leases;
- No security against MHC closure for redevelopment.

This opportunity to purchase legislation would provide:

- A proper, legal notice to homeowners and the state that the owners intend to sell the community.
- A 60-day period during which the residents can organize, incorporate as a nonprofit with the state, and make an informed choice about whether to make their own offer to the seller.
- A reasonable time after the 60-day period to obtain financing.
- A requirement that the seller negotiates in good faith with the residents.
- An effective enforcement mechanism.

Many of the residents in these communities are low-income, retired, veterans and local workforce individuals who contribute daily to making Maine the great state it is. Please join me in supporting LD# 1931 and helping to preserve one of the last unsubsidized low-income housing stocks left in the state.



Micha Josephy,
Executive Director