

# Maine Climate Action **NOW!**

To: Maine Legislature Committee on Housing

From: Ezra Sassaman, Advocacy Coordinator, Maine Climate Action Now

Date: January 23, 2024

Re: LD 853: RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Establish a Right to Housing

Senator Pierce, Representative Gere, and members of the Committee on Housing, my name is Ezra Sassaman. I am a resident of Bar Harbor and the Advocacy Coordinator for Maine Climate Action Now (MCAN), a statewide coalition of climate justice and youth-led organizations from across the state.

Everyone, in every community across Maine, deserves housing and the support necessary to maintain it. Housing is our primary means of survival and our single most important asset to ensure we live safe, healthy, productive lives. Including a natural, inherent and inalienable right to housing at the highest level of Maine law solidifies these truths and sets the stage for our state to realize housing justice.

MCAN also recognizes a right to housing as a climate justice issue. The changing climate has outsized adverse effects on poverty-stricken communities. Extreme weather and storms worsened by sea level rise will continue displacing homeless and low income families if their housing rights are not protected.

Following through on a right to housing secures a fundamental base level so that no Mainer is left behind. Once these everyday immediate needs are met, we can turn our collective attention to addressing the looming long-term problem of the climate crisis.

For the above reasons, our coalition encourages an “ought-to-pass” recommendation on LD 853. Thank you.

Ezra Sassaman  
Maine Climate Action Now  
LD 853

To: Maine Legislature Committee on Housing

From: Ezra Sassaman, Advocacy Coordinator, Maine Climate Action Now

Date: January 23, 2024

Re: LD 853: RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Establish a Right to Housing

Senator Pierce, Representative Gere, and members of the Committee on Housing, my name is Ezra Sassaman. I am a resident of Bar Harbor and the Advocacy Coordinator for Maine Climate Action Now (MCAN), a statewide coalition of climate justice and youth-led organizations from across the state.

Everyone, in every community across Maine, deserves housing and the support necessary to maintain it. Housing is our primary means of survival and our single most important asset to ensure we live safe, healthy, productive lives. Including a natural, inherent, and inalienable right to housing at the highest level of Maine law solidifies these truths and sets the stage for our state to realize housing justice.

MCAN also recognizes the right to housing as a climate justice issue. The changing climate has outsized adverse effects on poverty-stricken communities. Extreme weather and storms worsened by sea level rise will continue displacing homeless and low-income families if their housing rights are not protected.

Following through on a right to housing secures a fundamental base level so that no Mainer is left behind. Once these everyday immediate needs are met, we can turn our collective attention to addressing the looming long-term problem of the climate crisis.

For the above reasons, our coalition encourages an “ought-to-pass” recommendation on LD 853. Thank you.