

Joseph Leonard  
Bangor  
LD 2138

Dear Esteemed Committee,

I take pen to paper once more, echoing my fervent support for another crucial piece of legislation – LD 2138, the "Resolve, to Improve Funding for Homeless Shelters." Just like LD 2136, this here resolve is a beacon of hope for our unhoused brothers and sisters, and it deserves our unwavering support.

Now, let me weave a tale about Bangor's Hope House – a low-barrier shelter for our kinfolk on the poverty spectrum up here in northern Maine. This House of Hope ain't just a building; it's a lifeline that helps stave off homelessness, lightening the load for healthcare and social workers across our great state, especially down there in southern Maine. Picture this: if Hope House were to shutter its doors, more than 400 citizens battling homelessness in Penobscot County might just start a southerly migration, seeking the services they need. I don't reckon I need to spell out the dire straits Portland is already in, grappling with over 2,000 citizens experiencing homelessness. The city's got its hands full, and we don't want to add any more weight to their emergency and social services than we're already shouldering up north.

If we aim to sidestep a downright humanitarian catastrophe, the legislature's only play is to unabashedly back LD 2138 and make crystal clear what right looks like. We could take a page out of our friends in Finland's book – they've shown us a path to end homelessness that works. No need to fall for the fearmongering tactics of those who'd rather treat our fellow citizens in need like animals. Let's be on the right side of history here.

LD 2138 is more than a resolve; it's a call to action, a chance to stand tall for our communities, and a plea to learn from success stories around the globe. I implore you to lend your support to LD 2138 and steer us toward a future where every citizen has a fighting chance at a roof over their head and a life of dignity.

Yours in the spirit of justice,  
Joseph Leonard