



**Consumer Council System of Maine**  
A Voice for Consumers of Mental Health Services

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January 30, 2024

Good day, Senator Pierce, Representative Gere and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Housing.

My name is Simonne Maline. I am the Executive Director for the Consumer Council System of Maine (CCSM). I am writing on behalf of the CCSM to testify in support of **LD 2158 “An Act to Improve the Housing Voucher System”**

The Consumer Council System of Maine is a public instrumentality written into State Statute by the Maine Legislature to serve in an advisory capacity and to provide legislators with guidance and advice regarding the delivery of effective and appropriate adult mental health services from those served by them.

In our statewide efforts to hear from individuals in our mental health community, housing by far is the top issue shared with us. There are lots of different issues and this bill would help folks in many ways.

We often hear that even with a voucher, no matter if it is Sect 8 or BRAP vouchers, they often do not meet the market rate and we have heard that individuals turn their voucher back in due to lack of availability within the price limits. Also, giving people the chance for extensions is so important given the lack of housing in the communities of their choosing.

All the bills before you on housing are so critical for everyone in Maine. Add to it if you live in poverty, the challenges are even greater.

We encourage your support of the passage of LD 2158.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

**Simonne Maline**

Executive Director

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