



Town of Brunswick, Maine

INCORPORATED 1739

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February 8, 2024

Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs
c/o Office of Fiscal and Program Review
5 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Re: Testimony in support of L.D. 646, "An Act to Fully Reimburse Municipalities for Lost Revenue Under the Property Tax Stabilization for Senior Citizens Program."

Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachs, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Taylor Burns, I serve as the appointed Assessor for the Town of Brunswick, and I am writing to express support for L.D. 646 on behalf of the Town of Brunswick.

The Town of Brunswick is a service center for the region and, like all municipalities, relies primarily on property taxes to fund essential services and programs. In recent years, Brunswick has been faced with increased strain on its municipal and education budgets. Additionally, the taxpayers of Brunswick have not been immune to the inflationary events the Country has experienced, including, increased costs for basic goods, services, and housing. If the shortfall in revenue to reimburse municipalities for the Tax Stabilization Program is not addressed, it would place further strain on municipal budgets and the taxpayers of Brunswick.

The Town of Brunswick's total reimbursement request for 2023 taxes assessed in excess of stabilized amounts was \$722,686. While this is a fraction of the Town's operating budget, it is not an insignificant amount. The Tax Stabilization Program was implemented at great administrative burden with over 1,500 applications approved in Brunswick. Municipal officials are aware the State of Maine is constitutionally obligated to reimburse only 50% of lost revenue as a result of the Tax Stabilization Program, however, that program was passed (under L.D. 290) with the language and strong assurances from State Officials that municipalities would be able to recover 100% of lost revenue.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and strongly encourage the Committee, the Legislature, and the Governor to approve the passage of L.D. 646.

Respectfully,

Taylor Burns
Town Assessor

Julia Henze
Interim Town Manager

Jay Astle
Assistant Town Manager

Abby King
Town Council Chair

Sande Updegraph
Town Council Vice-Chair