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## Testimony of the Maine Municipal Association (MMA)

### In Support of Part GG & HH of

*LD 2214, An Act to Make Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of State Government, General Fund and Other Funds and to Change Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2024 and June 30, 2025*

February 23, 2024

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Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachs, and members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Kate Dufour, and I am submitting written testimony in support of Parts GG and HH of LD 2214 on behalf of the 70 municipal leaders who were elected by their peers to serve on the Association's Legislative Policy Committee and directed to establish MMA's position on bills of municipal interest.

Continued investment in programs to support workforce housing, as well as members of our unhoused population, are vital. Of specific significance to municipal leaders is that the initiatives found in Parts GG and HH are refreshingly focused on opportunities to foster productive private and public partnerships. As it has seemingly been the case over the last four years, and with growing intensity in recent weeks, municipal leaders and members of our shared communities who volunteer to serve on planning boards, ordinance rewrite committees and comprehensive planning committees have received the brunt of the frustration felt by state leaders that occurs when top-down solutions, of all designs, do not create the intended outcomes. Furthermore, it is often the case that these well-meaning efforts must be implemented locally, at the expense of community-designed solutions.

Municipal leaders are especially supportive of the proposal found in Part HH, which seeks to invest \$16 million to support privately-operated low barrier shelters, winter warming shelters, legal services, and other wraparound settlement services intended to help individuals integrate into the Maine's workforce and our communities. Municipal programs that receive federal funding are restricted from using those funds to provide or operate such shelters. To that end, this program will help to relieve some of the burden being carried by the property taxpayers in Maine's largest communities and ensure that vulnerable residents receive the full complement of services necessary to secure and retain safe housing.

Thank you for considering the municipal perspective on these issues. If you have any questions about the Association's position on these provisions of the supplemental budget bill, please do not hesitate to contact me at [kdufour@memun.org](mailto:kdufour@memun.org) or 1-800-452-8786.