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LD 2214

Please fund Housing Supports and Rent Relief in the Budget

Joaquina Nunes  
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Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachs, and honorable members of the Appropriations and Housing Committees: my name is Joaquina Nunes, I live in Lewiston Maine. I am here today to testify in favor of funding emergency shelters and rent relief in the budget.

I'm a case manager and interpreter, I have a big love for working in the community. I have spent a great deal of time in the last year in Sanford, helping people without homes find housing. Everyday I experience the struggle of finding safe, affordable housing for residents in Maine. I am no exception within the residents of Maine who pay more than 52% of our income in rent. I have a goal of going back to school but this is has become an impossible mission for me because I have a very expensive rent that make me work very long hours leaving me no extra time to pursue my goal and better my skills for a better and higher level job, surely ensure me a better future for me and my family. I feel stuck and I always think "just if I could pay less for my expenses I could be able to create my own steps and climb up these stairs" and better myself, and people around me.

For Maine to grow and prosper, we must invest in people, its workforce, and that means investing in housing. I am not standing here alone, all of us have been affected by this issue and perhaps you or your family members also have been affected by this housing crisis. We can not allow this to continue, let's all stand together so that our residents can have a place to call Home.