

Testimony from Tobin Williamson of the Maine Immigrants' Rights Coalition regarding:
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
Part GG and Part HH

Dear Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachs, Senator Pierce, Representative Gere, and Members of the Committees on Appropriations and Financial Affairs & Joint Committee on Housing:

My name is Tobin Williamson and I'm the Manager of Advocacy & Policy with the Maine Immigrants' Rights Coalition.

Thank you for the long day you've put in, we appreciate it. I don't have a lot to add that hasn't already been said, but I wanted to make sure to advocate both on behalf of my organization and as a Maine resident on the need for items you are considering like the Emergency Housing Relief Fund and other rent relief initiatives.

If anything, I want to emphasize how the affordable housing issue is a statewide issue, and therefore needs a state-led solution. The price issues in Portland and Cumberland County are well known, but I saw recently there was a public forum about the lack of affordable housing all the way up in Caribou. You have heard testimony today from people in Bangor, in Lewiston, all across the state.

This issue impacts immigrants and non-immigrants alike. Like Nate Howes from Avesta Housing earlier, we at MIRC would like to see more of all types of housing; any and every bit helps in a time like this when the needs are so great.

Thank you for your consideration.

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