



MAINE AFFORDABLE HOUSING COALITION

Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations & Financial Affairs & the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government

**Testimony of Laura Mitchell, Executive Director of the Maine Affordable Housing Coalition,
February 22, 2024**

**in favor of the Supplemental Budget LD2214, Office of Professional and Occupational Regulation -
page A-119; Elevator Inspectors**

Good afternoon, Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachs, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs.

My name is Laura Mitchell. I am the Executive Director of the Maine Affordable Housing Coalition. MAHC is a nonprofit organization with 140 member businesses and nonprofits working to design, develop, engineer, finance, and build affordable homes for all Maine people.

We are submitting this written testimony to express our organization's support for the initiative on establishing two Elevator Inspector positions in the Office of Professional and Occupational Regulation.

On November 28, 2023, both department staff and developers and contractors testified to the Joint Select Committee on Housing on the **urgent need to add capacity in the Elevator and Tramway Safety Program to facilitate the timely inspections necessary to bring much needed housing units online.** The current capacity of just two licensed inspectors causes delays of weeks, and in some cases months, that prevent housing developments from obtaining certificates of occupancy. One elevator industry professional noted that Maine has the least amount of elevator inspectors and the longest lead time in elevator inspectors than any state in which he does business.

At a time when Maine is short 38,000+ housing units, and needs an additional 40,000+ homes to meet the population and workforce needs by 2030, these delays are impeding our economy and causing suffering for the 4,000 people experiencing homelessness in Maine, and the 25,000 Maine people on waitlists for affordable apartments.

It is essential that Maine has sufficient elevator review and inspection capacity to complete housing projects in the most efficient manner possible.

It will take some time for these two new positions to reduce delay times. Based on industry professionals who testified in November, MAHC recommends adding the following two administrative changes to further reduce these delays:

1. Adding a fee that would allow a housing developer to expedite an inspection request.
2. Adjusting the timeframe of elevator inspections to allow them to occur before the rest of the building is safe and move-in ready, recognizing that the elevator inspections need not be forced to occur in concert with final inspections from municipalities issuing a certificate of occupancy. This is important to efficiently bring equipment and appliances to units before delaying occupancy.

Please support the two additional positions, and these two language suggestions to expedite these important inspections that currently pose a bottleneck for the creation of new housing that our economy and communities so desperately need.

3i Housing of Maine
55 Weston Avenue
AARP Maine
ABG Consulting, Gray
Acorn Engineering, Inc.
Allied Cook Construction, Portland
Anew Development LLC, Portland
Apartments for People LLC, Belfast
Archetype Architects, Portland
Associated General Contractors of Maine
Auburn Housing Authority
Augusta Housing Authority
Avesta Housing, Portland
Bangor Area Homeless Shelter
Bangor Housing
Bangor Savings Bank
Bank of New Hampshire, Falmouth
Bath Housing
Bath Savings Institution
Belknap Enterprise
Benchmark Construction, Westbrook
Boston Financial Investment Management
Bowman Constructors, Newport
Brunswick Housing Authority
Camden National Bank
Carpenter Associates
Catholic Charities of Maine
CEI, Brunswick
CH Architecture, Portland
City of Portland Department of Housing
Clark Insurance, Portland
Community Concepts, Lewiston
Community Housing of Maine, Portland
Consigli Construction Co., Inc.
Cooperative Development Institute, South Freeport
Cooperative Fund of the Northeast
CREA, LLC
Credent Associates, Westbrook
Cross Financial Corp., Portland
Cumberland County
Cumberland County
CWS Architects, Portland
Developers Collaborative, Portland
Development Services of New England, Freeport
Dovetail Consulting
DrummondWoodsum, Portland
Ducas Construction, Inc.
Dunbar & Brown Construction
Eagle Point Development, LLC
Eaton Peabody Consulting Group, Augusta
Eric Burmeister
Evernorth, Portland
Falmouth, Town of
Fort Fairfield Residential Development Corp.
Four Directions Development Corporation, Orono
Freeport Community Services
Freeport Housing Trust
Furniture Friends
Gannett Construction, Augusta
Gawron Turgeon Architects, Scarborough
Genesis Community Loan Fund, Brunswick
Gorham Savings Bank
Great Falls Construction, Gorham
Grommes Pulaski Consulting LLC, Portland
GrowSmart Maine
Habitat for Humanity of Greater Portland
Habitat for Humanity York County
Hancock Lumber, Casco
Healthy Androscoquin, Lewiston
Hebert Construction
Home Start, Peaks Island
Homeless Voices for Justice, Portland
Housing Foundation, Orono
Housing Initiatives of New England, Portland
Housing Partnership, Portsmouth, NH
Hunt Capital Partners LLC, El Paso, TX
Island Institute, Rockland
Islesboro Affordable Property
Jensen Baird Gardner & Henry, Portland
John Antora, Consultant, Portland
Kaplan Thompson Architects, Portland
Kennebec Savings Bank, Augusta
Kennebec Valley Community Action, Waterville
Kennebunk Savings
KeyBank
Knox County Homeless Coalition
Lake City Investments, LLC
Landry/French Construction, Scarborough
LaRochelle Consulting, LLC, Augusta
Lassel Architects, South Berwick
LB Development Partners, Portland
LeadingAge Maine & New Hampshire
Lewiston Housing Authority
M&T Bank
Medias Savings Bank
Maine Bureau of Veterans' Services
Maine Community Action Partnership
Maine Community Bank
Maine Department of Health & Human Services
Maine Equal Justice
Maine Immigrants' Rights Coalition
Maine Public Health Association
Maine Real Estate Managers Association
Maine State Building & Construction Trades
Maine Workforce Housing LLC, Portland
Mana en Mana, Millbridge
Mans Development LLC, Yarmouth
Mascoma Bank
Midcoast Regional Housing Trust
NBT Bank
Nickerson & O'Day, Inc., Bangor
North Haven Sustainable Housing
Northeast Rental Housing
Norway Savings Bank
Old Town Housing Authority
One Atwell C/Os, South Portland
Penobscot General Constructors
Penguin, Bangor
People's United Bank
PM Construction
Portland Builders
Portland Housing Authority
Preble Street, Portland
Preservation Management, South Portland
Preti Property, Portland
Raise-Op Housing Cooperative, Lewiston
Realty Resources Management
Rental Housing Alliance of Southern Maine
Rick Whiting
Rumford, Town of
Sanford Housing Authority
Scott Simons Architects, Portland
Sea Coast Management Company, Topsham
Shalom House, Portland
Silver Street Development Corporation, Portland
South Portland Housing Authority
Sparhawk Group, Yarmouth
St. Germain
Sunrise Opportunities, Machias
S.W. Cole Engineering, Gray
Santano Company
TD Bank
Tedford Housing, Brunswick
The Cable Group, Saco
The Eagle Point Companies, South Portland
The Housing Foundation
The Park Danforth, Portland
Thornton Tomasetti, Portland
Through These Doors, Portland
Total Construction Management, Winterport
TPD Construction Co., Sanford
United Way of Greater Portland
Utile, Inc.
Veterans Inc., Lewiston
Volunteers of America of Northern NE
Washington County Assoc for Ret. Citizens
Westbrook Housing Authority
Western Maine Community Action, E. Wilton
Winton Scott Architects
Wishcamper Companies, Portland
WNC & Associates
Wright-Ryan Construction, Portland
Yarmouth Housing Collaborative
Year-Round Housing Corp., Long Island
York County Community Action, Sanford
York Housing Authority
Zachos Construction, Freeport
Zero Energy Design
Zion Energy Services

Laura Mitchell
Maine Affordable Housing Coalition
LD 2214

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