

Rachael Haskell
Portland, Maine
LD 2214

Dear representatives,

My name is Rachael Haskell, and I am a resident of Portland, Maine, and I am writing to you today because I am concerned about the proposed budget. The \$108 million dollar surplus indicates that Maine is in strong financial standing, allowing us to utilize funds to help Mainers now—and there is so much help that is needed. Rents are impossibly high, and while I appreciate the efforts that have been made to address this issue, funding rent relief is a vital step to addressing this issue as well. Additionally, rolling back General Assistance is detrimental to the housing issue as well, as we need all of the assistance we can get to make housing accessible and affordable to Mainers. I have lived in Maine my whole life, and I have watched as the city where I live has grown more and more unaffordable to the folks that I grew up with. I cannot afford Portland rents and am only able to stay in the city because my parents have allowed me to stay with them—without their help, I would be at risk of being homeless or would otherwise have to leave the state that I call home. Many Mainers are in this position right now, and it is one that we must do everything in our power to solve. Every Mainer has a right to safe and affordable housing—our budget should reflect that.