



February 27, 2025

Justin Pervis
Clerk of the Appropriations Committee

Dear Mr. Pervis:

I am the President of Saco Falls Management, a mixed-income rental property management company located in Portland, Maine since 2013. We manage 717 rental apartments that are located in Portland, Lewiston, Auburn, Biddeford, Old Orchard Beach and Bath. Five Hundred of our units are part of the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program and are set aside for households earning at or below 60% of the area median income.

I became aware this week about LD210 and the proposed reform to the General Assistance Program. As a landlord renting affordable apartments, we regularly receive applications that list General Assistance as their source of rental payment. We have regularly provided high quality, stable housing to many of these applicants over the years. Limiting General Assistance to 3 months in a 12-month period, as the budget is proposing, will have a drastic impact on our ability to approve these applicants.

The LIHTC program requires a 1-year lease for all units rented. Applicants undergo a thorough verification process of all income/assets to ensure they meet the program qualifications. Applicants also have to show that they can afford the rental payments for the duration of their lease, either through sufficient income, a portable housing voucher that covers a portion of their rent or their intent to utilize General Assistance funds. If access to General Assistance is capped to a maximum of 3-months in a 12-month period, applicants would need to demonstrate a plan for where their rent funds will come from for the other 9 months. Without a stable plan, building owners and property management companies will have to consider the potential of losing consistent rent after 3 months. This rent instability may mean that applications with General Assistance would not be approved.

I'm asking that you consider the impacts that a required 12-month lease has on applicants. Looking at caps on General Assistance on a larger than 1 year scope may be helpful.

I'm asking that you consider the impacts that a required 12-month lease has on applicants. Looking at caps on General Assistance on a larger than 1 year scope may be helpful. For example, limiting General Assistance to no more than 12 months in a 24- or 36-month time frame would allow applicants to secure a home while they work to secure a plan for future rental payments.

Appreciate your consideration and please reach out with any additional questions.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kristin Martin', written in a cursive style.

Kristin Martin

President

Saco Falls Management

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