



# MAINE AFFORDABLE HOUSING COALITION

## **Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations & Financial Affairs & the Joint Standing Committee on Housing & Economic Development**

**AMENDED TESTIMONY** of Laura Mitchell, Executive Director of the Maine Affordable Housing Coalition,  
2.24.25 **NEITHER FOR NOR AGAINST** LD210 the Budget

Good afternoon, Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs; and Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development.

My name is Laura Mitchell. I am the Executive Director of the Maine Affordable Housing Coalition. MAHC is a nonprofit with 140 member organizations working to create and preserve affordable homes for all Maine people. MAHC, and the thousands of people that live in affordable housing in Maine, would like to thank the State for their unprecedented investments in housing recently.

**We applaud the inclusion in this budget of \$3 million to the fund to preserve manufactured home parks in Maine. This program has saved more than 400 affordable homes for Maine people and is vital to keeping people housed.**

Investments in building housing over the last few years has created the largest ever pipeline of 3,000 affordable homes under construction at Maine Housing. But these investments were only one time disbursements. **Of concern is that this budget actually cuts funding to Maine Housing's HOME Fund, that will force program cuts and reduce the state's leverage in bringing in outside investment for housing. We strongly urge the committee to not cut the HOME Fund.**

Our state's economy and health can't be sustained resting on a pipeline of 3,000 homes, because we need 80,000 new homes for our residents and future workforce. Without additional funding, the construction of affordable homes will dramatically decrease.

Further, there are two notably successful Maine Housing programs that will end this spring without new, additional funding – the Rural Affordable Rental Housing Program, and the Affordable Home Ownership Program. These programs have built homes from Aroostook County to York County and everywhere inbetween. In this final round of applications, we can see that projects are shovel ready, but just need some state funding to get built. The Rural Program had \$51 million in requests from housing projects, but only has \$25 million to distribute. The Home Ownership Program has projects that need \$13 million to get built, but only \$10 million to spend. These programs will end and shovel ready homes won't get built. That's a economic blow to towns throughout Maine. Housing is the SOLUTION for Maine's economy and health, and we need to find long-term, sustainable sources of funding to invest in the housing solution.

**MAHC is also concerned about access to the continuum of affordable housing due to the suggested 3-month limit on General Assistance for housing. General Assistance is the primary tool left to move people out of emergency shelters into rentals, and landlords won't sign leases for 3 months. This will clog the emergency shelter system, push more people outside, create instability for landlords, and force increased evictions. Maine's housing continuum is under dire pressure and this will make it worse.**

Finally, MAHC supports Part D of the budget that creates the Maine Office of Community Affairs.

MAHC looks forward to discussing options for long-term investments in housing in the coming months. Thank you for this opportunity to share our testimony today.

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  
CHI Architecture, Portland  
City of Portland Department of Housing  
Clark Insurance, Portland  
Community Concepts, Lewiston  
Community Housing of Maine, Portland  
Consigni Construction Co., Inc.  
Cooperative Development Institute, South Freeport  
Cooperative Fund of the Northeast  
CREA, LLC  
Credent Associates, Westbrook  
Cross Financial Corp., Portland  
Cumberland County  
Curtis Theater, Portland  
CWS Architects, Portland  
Developers Collaborative, Portland  
Development Services of New England, Freeport  
Dovetail Consulting  
DrummondWoodsum, Portland  
ECS 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 Antor, 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  
LaRoche Consulting, LLC, Augusta  
Lassel Architects, South Berwick  
LB Development Partners, Portland  
LeadingAge Maine & New Hampshire  
Lewiston Housing Authority  
M&T Bank  
Machias 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  
Mano en Mano, Millbridge  
Manna 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  
Ona Atwell CPAs, 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 Floherty, 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  
Spartan Group, Yarmouth  
St. Germain  
Sunrise Opportunities, Machias  
S.W. Cole Engineering, Gray  
Stanton Company  
TD Bank  
Tectonic 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  
WMC & 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  
Zero Energy Institute