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## Testimony in Opposition of LD 659

### An Act to Reduce Housing Costs by Not Requiring Fire Sprinkler Systems for Single Family Homes and Duplexes

Senator Curry, Representative Gere and distinguished members of The Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development. My name is William St. Michel, I am the retired Fire Chief of The Town of Durham and currently The Executive Director for Maine Fire Chiefs' Association. Maine Fire Chiefs Association is in opposition of LD 659.

Maine does not require the installation of sprinklers in one- and two-family dwellings. Although they are required in the National Codes accepted by the State of Maine. The requirement was taken out during the rule making process for adoption.

Residential Sprinklers are a Life Safety System first; property conservation is a bonus. Residential Sprinklers are designed to give occupants time to get out. Construction techniques allow for lighter weight construction, our life styles have increased the fuel load; lending to hotter fires with structures being compromised far sooner. Couple that with staffing shortages for many emergency services and we create a dangerous combination. Because of that many communities have chosen to put the safety of their citizens first and have adopted residential sprinkler ordinances.

LD 659 does not reduce any costs of housing unless a community chooses to adopt an ordinance requiring the installation of residential sprinklers. LD 659 instead takes the option of local choice away from the communities to the point of prohibiting the enforcement of an existing code that they may have adopted.

Maine Fire Chiefs' Association is in **OPPOSITION** to LD 659.

We ask for your support in preserving a community's right to choose and place Life Safety over cost with a vote of **OUGHT NOT TO PASS**.

Thank You!

Respectfully,  
William St. Michel  
Executive Director  
Maine Fire Chiefs' Association