

Betty Deschambault
Rangely
LD 879

Chairs Carney & Kuhn, members of the committee,

I am writing today in strong support of LD 879, which would increase the small claims limit for home construction contracts to \$25,000. I believe this legislation is critical to protect homeowners from financial harm when construction projects go wrong.

A few years ago, my elderly mother hired a contractor to repair the roof of her home after a severe storm. She signed a contract and paid the contractor \$18,000 upfront. Unfortunately, the contractor did substandard work — the roof still leaked, and within months, sections of it started to collapse. When my mother tried to contact the contractor to fix the problems, he ignored her calls and eventually disappeared.

My mother considered pursuing legal action, but the cost of hiring an attorney and filing a case in District Court was overwhelming, especially on a fixed income. The current small claims limit simply wasn't high enough to cover her loss, and she was left with little recourse. She eventually had to borrow money to pay a second contractor to repair the roof properly.

Raising the small claims limit to \$25,000 would make it easier for people like my mother to seek justice without having to navigate an expensive and complex court process. Home construction projects often involve large sums of money, and the small claims court should reflect the reality of those costs. This bill would protect homeowners, promote accountability in the construction industry, and ensure that Mainers have a fair path to recover their losses.

I urge you to support this bill and help protect homeowners like my mother from being financially devastated by dishonest or negligent contractors. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Betty Deschambault
Rangely, ME