

State of Maine - 132nd Legislature
Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development
Testimony of Cordelia Hill on behalf Southern Maine Agency on Aging (Biddeford, Maine)
March 18, 2025

Supporting:
LD698, "An Act to Sustain Emergency Homeless Shelters in Maine"

Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and members of the Committee on Housing and Economic Development:

My name is Cordelia Hill and I am testifying on behalf of myself and my community in support of this legislation. I appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of LD698, An Act to Sustain Emergency Homeless Shelters in Maine.

Southern Maine Agency on Aging is the focal point in Cumberland and York counties for resources, services and information to empower older adults, adults with disabilities, and their caregivers to live to their fullest potential. In my role as a resource specialist with the agency, I connect with callers asking for help. I respond to referrals from community organizations like primary and mental health care providers and legal services agencies working on eviction prevention. I also meet with people in the community, during open walk in hours at local libraries. Many of these contacts revolve around how to help people keep, maintain or find housing.

Homeless shelters are one of the critical resources that I share with older adults and people with disabilities, especially when they are facing eviction, living in their car or in a temporary housing situation (like a motel). If the shelters close, who will I call with the person who is 70, 80, 90 years old who couldn't afford the rising costs of food, healthcare, utilities and property taxes, who can't manage their rent now that it has increased, who has used up their money and can't continue to pay for a motel room, who doesn't have family or friends who they can stay with for a while? Emergency homeless shelters allow people to be safe, warm and sheltered, while we work together, collaborating across organizations, to connect with resources, search for housing and ultimately find a home. We absolutely need our shelters.

Please vote Ought to Pass on LD698, so that agencies like mine can continue to connect people who are experiencing homelessness to the resources, services and information that they need.

Thank you for your consideration.

Cordelia Hill

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Biddeford
LD 698

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