

MAINE SERVICE CENTERS COALITION

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Testimony of the Maine Service Centers Coalition LD 997, An Act to Allow Residential Use Development in Commercial Districts

Senator Curry, Representative Gere and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development, the Maine Service Centers Coalition is submitting testimony in opposition to LD 997, An Act to Allow Residential Use Development in Commercial Districts.

The Maine Service Centers Coalition, comprised of 26 towns and cities across the state, articulates the importance of healthy and thriving service center communities, advocates for public policy that supports and contributes to the economic and social viability of our communities, and collaborates with municipal officials, legislators, state agencies and nonprofits to pursue quality of life for all who live and work in our state.

Maine has long recognized local control as sacrosanct with local issues decided at the level of government closest to its citizens. Our Coalition firmly supports this principle. We believe municipalities are best positioned to determine what is necessary and, importantly, safest for their communities.

LD 997 encroaches on local control. If passed, the bill would mandate certain language be prohibited in municipal zoning ordinances, giving the state authority over development in local commercial districts. Decisions on municipal zoning ordinances should be left to individual cities and towns. Each of our service center communities is unique – what works in one may not work in another, especially when zoning is involved.

We respectfully ask you to vote ought not to pass on LD 997.

Thank you for your time and attention.