

Legislative Testimony Against LD 1016 - An Act to Establish the Manufactured Housing Community and Mobile Home Preservation and Assistance Fund

Introduction

Honorable members of the legislature, thank you for providing me the opportunity to present my testimony against LD 1016 - An Act to Establish the Manufactured Housing Community and Mobile Home Preservation and Assistance Fund. My name is Lori-Ann Touchette and I am the Park Manager of Duck-A-Way Mobile Home Park in Freeport, Maine. This park is owned by Half Moon Properties, a second-generation family of Maine residents. It is a small 26-unit park with 25 adults over 55, 17 other adults and 5 children. Many of our residents have lived at the park since the owners purchased it in 1997, and others have purchased homes within it as an affordable way to own property in Maine. This park is within walking distance to Winslow Park and offers its residents the opportunity to live an active healthy lifestyle without the worry of driving to be active.

If there were to be a \$50k per lot assessment added to our 26 units it would be impossible for Duck-A-Way to continue as a manufactured housing community. Duck-A-Way is a little community within the community of Freeport, Maine. Residents live on tree lined streets and for the \$545 monthly lot rent receive septic, water, trash pick-up and a much smaller property tax bill since they pay property taxes on their homes only.

Half Moon Properties could not afford to pay this additional assessment because it already pays many expenses to provide the tenants in Duck-A-Way with an affordable option to live on Casco Bay. Half Moon pays the Town of Freeport almost \$19k in real estate taxes. In addition, Duck-A-Way Mobile Home Park provides safe, clean drinking water from a well and this costs over \$5k a year to do so. We also maintain 20 septic tanks which means less septic waste that the Town of Freeport deals with financially. In addition, tree maintenance cost over \$15k for the last three years. Half Moon pays these expenses to provide the tenants with a park that they can afford to live in, but with the small size it cannot afford another large assessment like this.

Conclusion

In conclusion, while LD 1016 - An Act to Establish the Manufactured Housing Community and Mobile Home Preservation and Assistance Fund is being considered for its positive effects for the State of Maine, this would cause considerable harm to the second-generation owners and the community members within Duck-A-Way Mobile Home Park and ultimately other towns who would then need to help house these residents. I urge the legislature to consider the potential financial costs of this bill and explore alternative solutions that can support the State of Maine and the manufactured housing communities. Thank you for your time and consideration.