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LD 1067

My name is Celeste Yakawonis and I am a Director at Large for Blueberry Fields Cooperative in Brunswick. I have looked at LD1067-to improve the process for residents to purchase their mobile home park. I have to ask-improve the process for who? Surely not the homeowners as you are increasing the number of residents required and decreasing the times to contact them. When our park was put up for sale, we faced a rather daunting challenge of getting residents involved in the process. No one likes change and at first many wanted to just ignore this and hope it would go away. Many were afraid of their rents rising several hundreds of dollars. It took the Board many meetings to explain the repercussions of having a large investor buy the park. We held meetings every week at the high school showing residents the hows and whys of the purchase. Investors look at parks with one goal-make as much money off of the residents as they can-if some have to leave -oh well-get someone new in to pay the higher rent. Mobile homes are one of the last ways to have affordable housing. Every day on the news we hear that Maine needs thousands of units of housing yet many of them are not so affordable. Many of the residents in our park are on fixed incomes and we explained at every meeting that the only way we would control our own destiny was to purchase the park. People kept coming to learn more-other resident owned parks sent people to show us how they did it and the benefits they have. People were able to sleep a little easier not wondering how they would pay a lot rent increase-do they cut their food budget? Take only half a dose of medication to save money? I appeal to all of you who will look at this bill to see this is not making anything easier for the residents. It does make it easier for the investor to get a fast deal done. Please think of the people living in the parks-they pay taxes, help the economy and love the State of Maine. If you allow this bill to pass, how well are you going to sleep? Thank you.