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Testimony of Representative Holly Eaton in support of

**LD 1005: An Act to Allow Municipal Fire Departments with Trained
Personnel to Conduct Sprinkler Plan Reviews**

To the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus, and honorable members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee,

My name is Representative Holly Eaton, and I proudly represent House District 15, which includes the island and coastal communities of Deer Isle, Stonington, Brooklin, Tremont, Southwest Harbor, Frenchboro, Swan's Island, Isle au Haut, and Vinalhaven.

This bill proposes a simple, commonsense change: allowing municipal fire departments with personnel certified by the National Fire Protection Association to conduct sprinkler system plan reviews. I believe this change will be especially impactful for small and rural towns across Maine, and particularly the unbridged islands I represent.

In rural areas like mine, projects that require sprinkler system approval often face delays and additional costs simply because reviews must go through third-party providers or state agencies that are far removed from the community. By empowering qualified local fire departments to conduct these reviews, we can make the process more efficient, more cost-effective, and more responsive to the needs of the people on the ground.

This is about trusting trained professionals who already serve their communities with distinction — and who often know the buildings, landscapes, and infrastructure better than anyone else — to play a greater role in ensuring safety. It's also about equity — making sure rural towns and island communities aren't at a disadvantage simply because of their geography.

District 15: Brooklin, Deer Isle, Eagle Island Township, Frenchboro, Southwest Harbor,
Stonington, Swan's Island, Tremont, Isle au Haut, Vinalhaven

LD 1005 offers a pathway to smarter local governance, safer buildings, and reduced strain on limited municipal budgets. I urge the committee to support this bill and help give rural and island communities more tools to keep their residents safe.

Thank you for your time and consideration.