

Ann Dodd-Collins  
Portland  
LD 1029

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and esteemed members of the Health and Human Services Committee,

My name is Ann Dodd-Collins and I live in Portland, Maine.

I'm writing to support LD 1029: "An Act to Ensure General Assistance for Housing Does Not Reduce Assistance for Other Basic Necessities, and to Increase Presumptive Eligibility and State Reimbursement for General Assistance".

Mainers are spending a larger portion of their income on housing due to skyrocketing rents. LD 1029 would ensure that anyone on General Assistance would still be able to cover other basic needs in addition to housing costs while on the program. General Assistance is a last resort for Mainers facing extreme hardship. They should not have to choose between paying their rent and purchasing food and medicine. By helping people afford food, diapers, medicine, heat, electricity, and other necessities, it is a literal lifeline for households who find themselves in crisis.

Meanwhile, the housing crisis and increased rates of homelessness are putting a strain on our shelter system. By extending presumptive eligibility from 30 days to 6 months, LD 1029 would help municipalities cover some of the costs of shelter beds in their communities. This would reduce the risk of closure of current shelters, which are severely underfunded.

Housing, food, and shelter are basic human rights. I urge you to support LD 1029 to ensure that Mainers and towns facing economic hardship get the help they need.

Thank you.