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Testimony Of The Maine Association Of Planners To The Committee On Housing And Economic Development

**Written testimony NEITHER FOR NOR AGAINST LD 1184
"An Act to Require Municipal Reporting on Residential Building Permits, Dwelling
Units Permitted and Demolished and Certificates of Occupancy Issued"**

DATE OF HEARING: April 8, 2025

**Honorable Senator Curry, Honorable Representative Gere, and Distinguished
Members of the Housing and Economic Development Committee:**

The Legislative Policy Committee of the Maine Association of Planners (MAP) supports the effort of collecting and reporting data needed to track the state's housing production and affordability goals. Several communities and regional planning agencies have been developing reporting metrics over the past 4 or 5 years in an effort to better understand the regional and local status of housing. That effort has illustrated the existing challenges many communities face for even basic reporting, let alone the specific metrics articulated in this bill. As written, this bill will not produce the desired outcome because most towns and cities simply cannot produce the annual reports proposed.

We recommend that this bill shifts from an unfunded municipal mandate, to a directive for the Housing Opportunity Program (HOP) to generate an annual housing report and to solicit housing data from municipalities. Keeping the directive broad allows the HOP to be responsive to the data and the needs of policy makers in the future (i.e. this bill doesn't entertain reporting on rental vs. ownership, housing stock age and condition, or any other metric that may become a focus of future policy.) However, if the bill sponsor wishes to include some metrics directly in the statute we would recommend at least revising the proposed list such that the HOP annual reports include:

- Total existing dwelling units categorized into single-family, 2-to-4-family and more-than-4-family homes. This information is often readily available through tax assessment records and will provide a more holistic picture of housing across the state.
- Total existing dwelling units that are income restricted or otherwise held below market rate and the duration of those restrictions if known.
- Annual count of new dwelling units created and demolished.
- Annual count of new dwelling units that are income restricted or otherwise held below market rate if known.
- And that HOP may use permit, occupancy, entitlement, assessment, or other records in generating its annual report, rather than dictating which metric shall be collected.

While we support this bill's intent, we believe revising the language as described above will provide for better reporting outcomes.

Sincerely,

The Maine Association of Planners Legislative Policy Committee