April 10, 2025　　　　To the Distinguished Members of the 132nd Legislature:

Testimony in OPPOSITION **to LD 1344 mold:**

The Central Maine Apartment Owners Association (CMAOA) is a landlord membership organization of over 600, as well as a cooperative team member of other landlord associations across the State of Maine including: Southern Maine, Lewiston Auburn, Greater Bangor Area, and Augusta Area. We provide educational events, sponsor community events, provide access to discounts on supplies and industry needs like fuels, flooring materials and paint. Our overall goal is to support Landlords in providing safe and affordable housing in collaboration with the valuable good renters in our area. CMAOA and the other organizations are neutral, nonpartisan, member led groups that have the common goal of keeping the rental housing industry safe, educated, and competitive.

We already have local code enforcement to handle reports from tenants. Assuredly, code enforcement responds well before the time frames set out in this bill. As written, will the local code act as the "health inspector"? If so, what will the extent of the mold training be for local municipalities? The local municipality is the best place to keep enforcement of habitability concerns.

Creating a new bureaucracy costs money to implement and enforce? Will the court system be getting more money to hear cases? Will the health inspectors get more funding? What tests or companies will be considered "professional."

If there is a true mold hazard, the tenants should relocate somewhere else immediately. How mold affects individuals is highly subjective and more examples of this subjectivity can be found on the EPA site EPA GUIDE LINK HERE.

Could this law cause a reduction in response time for the average tenant? Does this bill put the burden of mold created by the tenants' lifestyle in the same category if the landlord reports the tenant's unit?

We urge you to oppose LD 1344.

Board of Directors of Central Maine Apartment Owners Association, Waterville, Maine