

Liz Trice
Portland
LD 1082

Committee Members,

I'm writing today to encourage you to support LD 1082 - An Act to Invest in Maine's Families and Workforce by Amending the Real Estate Transfer Tax.

My name is Liz Trice, I've lived most of my life in Portland, and I have a masters' degree from the Muskie School in Public Policy with a focus on Community Development. I currently work in housing and land use policy.

I support LD 1082 because:

I believe the heart, soul and economy of Maine is based on our access to unspoiled natural places including forest, farm, and coastline, and our pattern of small towns where people know and trust each other. As Maine grows in population, we have to start investing our transportation dollars in systems that will preserve these things.

I want to live in a state of vibrant small towns, farms, and forests, and believe we can have it if we plan for it. We need to invest more in densifying our small towns rather than sprawling across farms and forest. We need to build more housing where infrastructure already exists, not building new roads. If our only solution is expensive large homes on large lots, we will become a state of subdivisions and highways, which will be unaffordable to most young households with roots and jobs in Maine.

As you know, the cost of housing has grown increasingly out of reach for average Maine families. Although Maine has wanted to increase its workforce and population, our housing production has not kept up with inflow of population, and increased construction costs and interest rates, as well as a lack of planning for growth, has hindered production.

At this point, money is the primary barrier to creating the housing we need to equitably house our growing population and protect the farms and forests, and towns we hold so dear. A modest tax on the fastest growing, largest properties, is very fair, and will create the funds needed to build new housing.

We need to plan for a better future for Maine that upholds the values of community, equity, and preserving our rural economies.

Thank you.