

**To: Maine Legislature – Committee on Housing – April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

**Re: Opposition to LD 1534 – An Act Enabling Municipalities to Protect Tenants and Stabilize Rents**

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

We are a small, family-run business managing 41 apartments in Portland. We've worked hard to be part of the solution—redeveloping two distressed buildings into 21 and 16 units of safe, quality housing. We did this through the challenges of COVID, rising construction costs, and shifting regulations, because we care deeply about providing homes and strengthening our community. But bills like LD 1534 make it harder for us to keep going. They don't support housing providers—they discourage us. If the system keeps getting more complicated, we won't be able to keep building, managing, or even maintaining the housing Maine needs so urgently.

LD 1534 opens the door for inconsistent, locally-imposed rent controls and complex changes to eviction protections. While well-intentioned, it would create legal confusion and administrative burdens that fall hardest on small landlords like us—people who are hands-on, responsive, and trying to do the right thing. Stripping away no-cause evictions leaves us unable to address difficult tenants who harm neighbors or threaten the safety of our buildings. It puts our good tenants at risk and erodes the communities we've worked so hard to build.

When the law ties our hands and floods us with red tape, it doesn't just make housing harder to manage—it makes us question whether we can keep doing this at all. Courtrooms replace construction sites, and paperwork overtakes progress. This bill sends a clear message to small landlords: your work is no longer welcome here. And yet, if we walk away, who will build the next units? Who will step up to house the people Maine desperately needs to attract and retain?

We're already seeing the market shift. Rents have stabilized, and we've lowered some just to stay competitive—despite vacancy rates remaining largely the same. That tells us what we already know: the answer isn't more regulation, it's more housing. But LD 1534 sends the opposite message. It punishes the very people trying to build and manage Maine's housing supply—especially the small, local businesses that form its foundation.

According to Camoin Associates' recent national report, Maine ranks 46th out of 51 in economic development success. We also have the largest gap in the country between available jobs and available housing. Employers are ready to hire. Communities are ready to grow. But people have nowhere to live. Housing isn't just a social issue—it's an economic imperative. Without it, Maine cannot compete.

We want to be part of the solution. But if laws like LD 1534 continue to make it harder—not easier—to build and manage housing, small landlords like us won't be able to stay in the game. Please help us keep showing up for Maine's housing future.

We urge you to oppose LD 1534 and instead support policies that encourage housing development, uphold tenant safety through consistent enforcement, and maintain a clear, fair legal framework statewide.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Packard Weber

219 Foreside Rd, Falmouth, ME 04105

Housing Provider / Small Business Owner / Mother & Grandmother to a family of Mainers

Jennifer Packard Weber  
Portland  
LD 1534

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