



4/24/2025

Support for LD 1522, *An Act to Establish the Maine Eviction Prevention Program*

Dear Sen. Curry, Rep. Gere, and members of the Housing and Economic Development Committee,

My name is Craig Saddlemire, and I am the Development Organizer for the Raise-Op Housing Cooperative in Lewiston, Maine. We own 5 apartment buildings, home to 33 different households, and 90 residents, a majority of whom are low-income. I am here to testify in support of LD 1522.

In my time working with low and moderate income residents, I frequently see how an unexpected life event - such as a medical issue, injury, or loss of employment - can cause a disruption to household finances, causing one or more missed payments of rent. And I have also seen how small interventions, such as temporary rent relief and payment plans, can help get tenants back on track. This is good for tenants, and it is also good for landlords. Without that support, the setback can be devastating and the resident's circumstances can spiral beyond their control. This not only hurts the tenants, but the landlord also incurs many costs for the eviction proceeding, maintenance for unit turnover, and lost income during that turnover period.

The new Eviction Prevention Program (EPP) is expected to keep 1,600 households safely housed, preventing the equivalent of three-quarters of all eviction filings last year for non-payment of rent. This also helps communities that would potentially be dealing with the public costs of homelessness for these evicted tenants.

This is a tremendous tool to help promote housing stabilization, and it is essential that it continue so that we can make progress towards eliminating homelessness and achieving long term housing stability for the people of Maine. We have a long road in front of us, and it's important that we keep moving forward together.

Thank you and please move LD 1522 ought to pass.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Craig Saddlemire". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Craig Saddlemire
Cooperative Development Organizer
Raise-Op Housing Cooperative