



April 25th, 2025

Testimony in support of LD1522: An Act to Establish the Maine Eviction Prevention Program

Good morning Chair Curry, Chair Gere, and distinguished members of the Committee on Housing and Economic Development.

My name is Eli Durand-McDonnell, I am from Bar Harbor, Maine and I am the Policy Coordinator at Maine Youth Power, a youth-led, youth movement throughout rural and suburban Maine fighting to win human dignity, equity and a livable future for all. I am here today to ask that you support LD1522.

Maine, like many states across the country, is facing a brutal housing crisis. Many renters, especially young people or those without economic privilege are met with a lack of housing options, much less options that are actually affordable. As an organization, addressing this housing crisis from all angles is a chief concern of ours. In a months-long issue survey where we heard from over 100 young Mainers about what political issues mattered the most to them, affordable housing was ranked as the second most important issue, and “supporting housing-insecure people in transition” was ranked highly as a priority within that issue category.

We know that we need long-term solutions to Maine’s housing crisis, but we also know that so many Mainers, young and old, need immediate support. Skyrocketing rents have far outpaced incomes, and young people that are just starting out their renting careers are especially vulnerable as they often haven’t had time to build a financial safety net. In fact, many people that signed up for the EPP were experiencing some sort of temporary emergency—events like a recent job loss or a medical accident or emergency. This makes it clear that especially for young Mainers or those that are financially vulnerable, this program provided a crucial lifeline, and a path for Mainers to get back on their feet. Establishing the Maine Eviction Prevention Program as a permanent program will help more Mainers stay housed, thereby helping more Mainers avoid cyclical patterns of economic difficulty or poverty.

Once again, I urge you to support LD1522.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Eli Durand-McDonnell