



Consumer Council System of Maine
A Voice for Consumers of Mental Health Services

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April 25, 2025

Good afternoon, Senator Curry, Representative Gere and esteemed members of Housing and Economic Development Committee.

My name is Simonne Maline. I am the Executive Director for the Consumer Council System of Maine (CCSM). I am here today on behalf of the CCSM to testify **in support of LD 1522, "An Act to Establish the Maine Eviction Prevention Program"**.

The Consumer Council System of Maine is a public instrumentality written into State Statute by the Maine Legislature to serve in an advisory capacity and to provide legislators with guidance and advice regarding the delivery of effective and appropriate adult mental health services from those served by them.

Eviction is more than just the loss of housing, it is a crisis that can initiate a cascade of negative outcomes, especially for individuals living with mental health challenges. A loss of stable housing often equates to losing access to treatment, medication, and community supports. This subsequently increases strain on emergency services, shelters, and hospitals, all of which are increasingly overburdened.

We are grateful for the work done through the pilot program and believe it is an integral step to addressing the housing crisis in our state. LD 1522 proposes a proactive and compassionate solution. By making the Maine Eviction Prevention Program permanent, this bill seeks to intervene before court proceedings or homelessness becomes inevitable.

CCSM strongly supports this bill because it recognizes housing as a human right and emphasizes that eviction prevention is not only more humane, but also more cost-effective than managing the consequences of homelessness.

We urge the committee to vote **Ought to Pass on LD 1522** and help create a reality where all people have an equitable opportunity to remain stably housed and supported.

Thank you for your time and your commitment to housing justice.

Sincerely,

Simonne M. Maline

Executive Director