

Mayor and Council Offices

Mark Dion

Mayor

April 25, 2025



Testimony of Mayor of the City of Portland, Mark Dion

Before

The Joint Standing Committee on Taxation

In Support of

LD 1665, An Act to Provide Property Tax Relief to Maine Families

April 25, 2025

Senator Grohoski, Representative Cloutier, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Taxation, I write on behalf of the City of Portland to express our strong support for LD 1665: An Act to Provide Property Tax Relief to Maine Families.

Portland, like many municipalities across Maine, is experiencing increasing strain on our residents due to the growing burden of property taxes. While the cost of living continues to rise, wages and fixed incomes have not kept pace—particularly for older adults, low-income families, and renters who bear the indirect impact of these rising costs. LD 1665 offers meaningful relief by expanding the Property Tax Fairness Credit, raising benefit caps, and improving access for residents who need it most.

The expanded credit amounts proposed in LD 1665 will directly benefit residents with children and those over 65, two populations disproportionately impacted by housing insecurity. Portland is home to thousands of residents in both categories, and we have seen firsthand how modest tax relief can provide a critical cushion against displacement, debt, or homelessness.

This kind of targeted relief also serves as a practical, cost-effective strategy. By helping families and seniors remain stable in their homes, LD 1665 can prevent downstream reliance on emergency housing, public assistance, and health services, which often come at a higher cost to both the state and municipalities. Investing in housing stability through the tax code is fiscally prudent and strengthens long-term community resilience.

We are also especially pleased with the bill's provision directing the Department of Administrative and Financial Services to convene a working group to simplify the Property Tax

Fairness Credit application and eligibility process. Many eligible residents do not receive this benefit simply because the current system is confusing and inaccessible. In our experience, particularly with older adults and low-income households, barriers to access can turn a helpful credit into a missed opportunity. Including municipal officials in this working group is a smart and welcome addition, as local governments are on the front lines of service delivery and engagement.

At a time when economic pressures continue to challenge our most vulnerable residents, LD 1665 represents thoughtful, well-structured policy that aligns with both fiscal responsibility and community well-being. By increasing access, predictability, and fairness in Maine's tax relief programs, this bill helps reduce pressure on more costly public systems while keeping working families and seniors housed and financially secure.

We urge the Committee to vote "Ought to Pass" on LD 1665 and thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mark Dion", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mark Dion
Mayor
City of Portland, Maine