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April 30th, 2025

Housing and Economic Development Committee

c/o Maine State Legislature

100 State House Station

Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Members of the Housing and Economic Development Committee,

I am writing to respectfully voice my strong opposition to LD 1723, “An Act to Amend the Laws Governing Manufactured Housing Communities to Prevent Excessive Rent and Fees Increases.” While I appreciate the intent to protect residents from abrupt cost increases, I am deeply concerned that this bill, as written, overreaches and will have serious unintended consequences.

Capping rent increases at a fixed percentage over time, regardless of inflation, rising operational costs, or community reinvestment needs, unfairly restricts the ability of manufactured housing community owners to responsibly manage their properties. This kind of regulation can result in reduced maintenance, delayed infrastructure improvements, and disincentivize future investment in manufactured housing—one of the most important sources of affordable housing in Maine.

Moreover, the bill introduces a burdensome exemption process for property owners, requiring documentation and justification even for modest rent increases driven by legitimate cost-of-living adjustments. This is particularly concerning in a time of escalating costs for utilities, insurance, labor, and materials. Rather than creating long-term affordability, LD 1723 may lead to deteriorating conditions that harm the very residents it seeks to protect.

Preserving housing affordability is essential, but that goal must be balanced with the sustainability of the communities themselves. A more constructive approach would involve dialogue between stakeholders to create fair rent practices that reflect both the financial realities of operators and the needs of residents.

I urge you to vote “Ought Not To Pass” and instead pursue policies that support both affordability and housing quality for Maine residents.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Oneglia". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'M'.

Michael Oneglia