

Public Testimony in Support of LD 1723

Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development:

My name is Megan Smith, and I am from Milford. I'm here today to testify in strong support of LD 1723, a bill that would place fair and reasonable limits on how much lot rents can increase in Maine's mobile home parks.

I grew up in a mobile home park. It was a good, stable place for my family — a place where we could afford to live and be part of a real community. But everything changed when the park was sold. The new owner raised the lot rent, and for the first time, my family found ourselves doing the math and realizing it no longer made sense to stay. We owned our home, but not the land underneath it, and we couldn't keep up with the rising costs.

We were lucky. This was nearly 30 years ago, and back then, land was much more affordable. We were able to purchase a small piece of property and move our home — something that was only possible because prices were lower and because we had support from extended family to help with the costs. But that kind of solution just isn't available to most people today. Land prices have skyrocketed, moving a mobile home is even more expensive now, many residents don't have family or financial support to fall back on, and a lot of residents are on fixed incomes.

That's why this bill is so important. Residents of mobile home parks are homeowners. They maintain their homes, pay taxes, and contribute to their communities — but they don't have control over the ground beneath them. When corporate owners raise rents suddenly and steeply, residents often have no realistic way to move their homes or find affordable alternatives. They're stuck. And without limits, those rent hikes can force people out of homes they've lived in for decades.

LD 1723 doesn't prevent park owners from covering their costs or maintaining their communities — it simply sets a cap on how much and how fast lot rents can increase, and it gives residents a measure of predictability and protection.

I urge you to support LD 1723 and stand with the thousands of Mainers who live in mobile home parks. They deserve the same stability and peace of mind that any homeowner should have — the ability to know their home will remain affordable, year after year.

Thank you for your time and attention.

