



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

JANET T. MILLS
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL DUGUAY
COMMISSIONER

May 2, 2025

Senator Chip Curry
Representative Traci Gere
Committee on Housing and Economic Development
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

**Re: Testimony Neither For Nor Against
LD 1500 – An Act to Establish the Maine Community Development Financial Institution Program**

Dear Senator Curry, Representative Gere and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to provide testimony neither for nor against LD 1500 “An Act to Establish the Maine Community Development Financial Institution Program.”

This legislation is an important and timely step toward empowering Maine’s underserved communities by enabling greater access to capital through community development financial institutions (CDFIs). These institutions are uniquely positioned to serve populations and regions that traditional financial institutions may overlook — including many of Maine’s rural communities.

The creation of the Maine Community Development Financial Institution Fund and Program will strengthen our economic development toolkit by supporting small businesses, affordable housing, and local job creation — all key pillars of resilient, sustainable communities.

We appreciate that this bill is structured to be fiscally responsible. It leverages the existing administrative capacity of the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), which we believe is well-equipped to manage the program within current resources. The department has a strong track record of administering similar funding mechanisms with accountability, efficiency, and impact.

Given the current fiscal environment, we would respectfully suggest the fund be initially seeded with as little as \$1,000, allowing the program framework to be established without significant up-front expenditure. This conservative approach provides a responsible foundation for future growth.



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As Maine's financial position improves, the Legislature would retain the flexibility to make additional investments to scale the fund and expand its reach.

The beauty of this proposal is that it balances ambition with pragmatism. It signals our commitment to equitable economic development, while keeping initial costs minimal and allowing ample room for measured expansion over time.

Recognizing the budgeting challenges we're facing, we hope this information proves helpful as the committee undertakes its upcoming work. Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration and for your continued work to support Maine's communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Maureen Terry".

Maureen Terry

Legislative Liaison
Department of Economic and Community Development