

**Testimony of Lani Graham, MD, MPH, Freeport, Maine
In Support of LD 1940 & LD 1751**

An Act to Revise the Growth Management Program Laws (1940)

An Act to Improve the Growth Management Program Laws (1751)

Presented by Rep. Sachs (LD 1940) and Rep. Mastraccio (LD 1751)

Before the Housing and Economic Development Committee May 8, 2025

Senator Bennett, Representative Mastraccio, and Members of the Housing and Economic Development Committee, my name is Lani Graham. I am a physician, a public health expert, and I am here in support of LD's 1940 & 1751. Maine people and particularly Maine children need your efforts to combine these similar efforts into one bill that can move Maine forward more effectively into the 21st century.

I was inspired to look at these bills because one of them is sponsored by my own Representative, Melanie Sachs. She knew I would be interested in these bills due to the implications for public health. Careful and thoughtful management of growing communities is essential for public health. The built environment determines who will be able to walk or bicycle safely in any community. It also determines exposure to all manner of important variables like clean water, clean air and earth safe for the growing of vegetables. The way we plan our communities determines who will be able to walk to school and whether a child is exposed to lead or other contaminants.

Sadly, I was not involved in the lengthy discussions that made each of these two bills possible. But three things became clear to me in reading the bills.

First, the current growth management laws are not serving Maine communities as we had hoped. Change is needed.

Second, there are a lot of similarities in the two bills and therefore it shouldn't be hard for the supporters to come together and reach an agreement.

Third, I really like the stakeholder group proposed in LD 1940. This seems like a better on-going approach than leaving things to the Department. This group has the potential to keep the planning process moving forward effectively suggesting that you might not need to return to these Laws soon. From a health perspective, I would like to suggest adding someone with public health expertise to the Stakeholder group.

Thank you for your attention. I would be glad to answer any questions you might have.