



Testimony of the Maine Real Estate Managers Association (MREMA)
In Support of LD 1927 – An Act to Protect Housing Quality by Enacting Mold Inspection, Notification and Remediation Requirements

The Maine Real Estate Managers Association (MREMA). MREMA is a nonprofit organization representing over 80 professional property management companies across Maine, collectively managing over 20,000 housing units. We aim to promote professional asset management through effective leadership and collaborative relationships, ensuring safe and quality housing for Maine residents.

We commend the sponsors of LD 1927 for addressing the critical issues of leaking events, mold, and dampness in rental properties. The health and safety of tenants are paramount, and this bill takes significant steps toward ensuring that rental units are maintained to standards that protect occupants from the adverse effects of moisture and mold. LD 1927 establishes clear responsibilities for landlords and tenants concerning the inspection, notification, and remediation of leaking events and mold. By defining timelines for inspections and repairs and by setting standards for mold assessment and remediation, the bill provides a framework that promotes accountability and protects tenant health.

Recommendations for Consideration

While we support the intent and provisions of LD 1927, we respectfully suggest the following amendments to address practical challenges that may arise during implementation:

1. **Extension of Timelines in "Act of God" Weather Events:** The bill requires landlords to inspect reported leaking events within 24 hours and repair the source of leaks within 5 days. However, during severe weather events—such as hurricanes, blizzards, or widespread flooding—access to properties may be impeded, and repair resources may be strained. We recommend including a provision that allows for reasonable extensions of these timelines in the event of declared emergencies or "Act of God" scenarios, ensuring that landlords are not penalized for delays caused by circumstances beyond their control.
2. **Additional Time for Comprehensive Planning When Multiple Units Are Affected:** When a leaking event impacts multiple units or common areas, developing an effective remediation plan may require coordination among various professionals and scheduling considerations. We suggest allowing landlords up to 14 days to create and share a comprehensive repair and remediation plan with affected tenants when multiple units are involved, ensuring thorough and effective responses to complex situations.
3. **Acknowledgment of Drying and Repair Logistics:** The 5-day window for repairing leaks and restoring affected areas may not account for the time required to dry out spaces and prevent mold growth properly. Drying processes, especially in significant water intrusion cases, can take several days to complete before repairs can safely commence. We propose that the bill explicitly recognize the need for adequate drying time as part of the remediation process, allowing for flexibility in meeting repair deadlines without compromising the quality and effectiveness of the work.

Conclusion

MREMA is committed to maintaining high standards in property management and ensuring the well-being of tenants throughout Maine. We believe that LD 1927, with the suggested amendments, will provide a balanced and practical approach to addressing the challenges of leaking events and mold in rental properties. We appreciate the opportunity to contribute to this vital discussion and stand ready to assist in developing policies that promote safe and healthy housing for all Mainers.