



**Testimony of Marge Kilkelly on Behalf of  
the Maine Council on Aging to the  
Committee on Housing and Economic Development**

In Favor of LD 1940 An Act to Revise the Growth  
Management Program Laws

Submitted May 8, 2025

Thank you Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and Members of the Committee on Housing and Economic Development.

My name is Marge Kilkelly, and I am a Policy Consultant for the Maine Council on Aging (MCOA) which is a broad, multidisciplinary network of over 140 organizations, businesses, municipalities, and older community members working to ensure we can all live healthy, engaged, and secure lives with choices and opportunities as we age at home and in community settings. The MCOA is a unifying force across sectors that is creating a new narrative about aging and older people in Maine with the goal of building local, statewide, and national support for the systemic changes needed to support our new longevity.

**I am testifying LD in Favor of LD 1940 An Act to Revise the Growth Management Program Laws.**

Humans are living longer than ever before, and data shows this trend is here to stay. According to the Stanford New Map of Life, because a 100-year life is a blessing many of us will be able to enjoy, we must intentionally begin creating longevity ready communities that support people living into their 90s and 100s as active and engaged members of those communities.

This means intentionally including people in their 80s, 90s and 100s in designing community features that work for them, and not just thinking all adults are the same. People who live in age-positive communities with age-positive beliefs live 7.5 years longer with fewer chronic conditions, less anxiety and depression, and better brain health than those who don't.

While nearly all older people want to age in their homes for as long as possible, many older Mainers come to the point where they realize they must leave their homes because they cannot afford to stay or the services and systems that they need are not available in their community.

When older Mainers are able to stay in their communities it not only enhances their quality of life but also provides benefits to the community. Healthier older people are able to work, volunteer and lead longer, solving some of our workforce and volunteer challenges and being good stewards of our communities and environment.

Age-integrated communities create a sense of community and belonging, fostering stronger social bonds and a more cohesive society, resulting in better health outcomes, more community involvement, and decreased loneliness for older individuals. The age-integrated communities

have even been found to be safer as older residents, often retired, can formally or informally be the eyes and ears of the community during the day.

Age-integrated communities create opportunities for older adults to serve as mentors and role models. The interactions between community members can help break down age stereotypes lead us to a future without ageism.

To build longevity ready communities, we can't keep doing the same kind of comprehensive planning we've always done. Traditional comprehensive planning has never asked the question, how do we ensure people not only feel like they belong in our communities, but that our communities are intentionally designed to include them at any age.

LD 1940 changes the planning model and goals and creates more opportunities for input. To that end, MCOA recommends that Sec. 25 Director to convene stakeholder group. Be amended to include a member of a statewide organization that advocates for inclusion of older people.

I urge you to support LD 1940.