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Testimony of Representative Marc Malon in support of
**LD 1912, An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Address Maine's
Housing Shortage**

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs

Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs, my name is Marc Malon, and I represent House District 133, which is part of the great City of Biddeford. I am happy to submit testimony in support of **LD 1912, An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Address Maine's Housing Shortage**.

Time and again, the Legislature has looked towards a variety of solutions to address our state's housing crisis. Currently, folks are struggling to afford homes in the communities of their choosing for a variety of reasons: population growth, labor and material shortage as well as an aging housing stock. All of these factors coalesce resulting in a sharp drop in housing development, production and construction; making homes more expensive than ever.

One of the surest ways to make homes more affordable is to increase the number of dwelling units available. A [2023 study](#) released by MaineHousing set a production goal of approximately 80,000 units by the year 20230 to meet demand. That number is stark, but LD 1912 is one of the tools in our toolbox that we can use to meet that goal.

The measure, sponsored by Senator Bennett, seeks to appropriate \$60,000,000 in funds so that builders can do what they are meant to: build. While the asking amount is steep, it will provide funds towards a number of vital housing initiatives: This includes subsidizing the Innovative Housing Incentive Program to support manufacturers of manufactured homes as well as create grants that will support the operating expenses and development of affordable, energy-efficient housing and the development of low-interest loans for new factories.

Additionally, the funds could be used to expand existing factories by capitalizing the Home Accessibility and Repair Program Fund, to support the MSHA's home accessibility and repair program fund, as well as the state's weatherization program, so that eligible low-income households can access weatherization readiness and weatherization projects. Finally, the measure would create a pilot program to issue grants to nonprofit housing developers to rehabilitate existing aging housing stock in the state for purchase by qualified first-time home buyers.

Overall, the funds will be a net benefit, and I am hopeful for the passage of this bill.