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President of the Senate

THE MAINE SENATE  
132nd Legislature

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***Testimony of Senate President Mattie Daughtry in support of  
LD 1806, “An Act to Create a Residential Unit Registry”  
Before the Joint Standing Committee Housing and Economic Development***

Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and esteemed members of the Housing and Economic Development Committee, my name is Mattie Daughtry and I am proud to serve as the President of the Maine State Senate, where I am honored to represent Senate District 23, which includes Brunswick, Freeport, Harpswell, Pownal, Chebeague Island and part of Yarmouth. Today, I write to express my strong support for LD 1806, An Act to Create a Residential Unit Registry, particularly with its proposed amendment to conduct a study on how to implement this important program within the Secretary of State's office.

This bill represents a significant step forward in ensuring transparency and accountability within the residential rental market in our state. By creating a comprehensive residential rental unit registry administered by the Secretary of State, we can gather crucial data about rental properties and enhance our understanding of the housing landscape in Maine. A study to determine how best to establish this registry aligns perfectly with the Secretary of State's existing responsibilities in collecting data on corporate filings. Just as we track valuable information about businesses in Maine, it makes sense to include real estate-related data, another vital sector of our business community.

Incorporating a rental registry within the Secretary of State's office is not just a matter of administrative efficiency; it could also serve as an invaluable tool for connecting individuals and families in need of housing with available rentals. As we face various challenges in our communities—particularly concerning workforce issues—the ability to easily access data about available housing units can help address the pressing needs of our residents and economy.

One of the critical issues we currently grapple with is housing insecurity, which has been exacerbated by recent economic challenges. By requiring all residential rental property owners to register their units, we will establish a more structured and regulated rental market that better protects tenants' rights. This registry will provide municipalities with valuable insights, empowering them to make informed decisions to better serve their communities.

In summary, LD 1806, with its proposed study amendment, is a vital legislative measure that addresses both the needs of renters and landlords while fostering a more equitable and accountable rental market in our state. I urge this committee to support this bill, which promises to benefit all Maine residents who deserve safe, secure, and equitable housing.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.