

**Testimony of Linda Caprara
for the Maine State Chamber of Commerce in Opposition to
L.D. 1770, “An Act Provide Immediate and Long Term Property Tax Relief to
Maine Households”
May 1, 2025**

Good afternoon, Sen. Grohoski, Rep. Cloutier and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Taxation. My name is Linda Caprara, I am the Vice President of Advocacy for the Maine State Chamber of Commerce. I am also a resident of Winthrop. We are testifying neither for nor against on L.D. 1770, “An Act Provide Immediate and Long-Term Property Tax Relief to Maine Households.”

As you know property taxes have become a huge issue in Maine. Property valuations have skyrocketed across the state, particularly with respect to waterfront properties. In addition, the costs of municipal services, driven largely from increasing labor rates and inflation, have ballooned. As a result, property taxes have increased dramatically with no apparent end in sight.

While L.D. 1770 aims to address the property tax burden, there is a notable and concerning gap with respect to membership of the proposed Real Estate Property Tax Relief Task Force. While the membership of the group rightfully contains municipal leaders, it has limited voices from the business community that needs to be a partner in developing a credible property tax strategy. With respect to L.D. 1770 we propose the bill be amended to include a representative from a statewide business organization be added to the Real Estate Property Task Force. We understand that the legislation includes one member “who represents the business sector and who has paid property taxes over the last 10 years” However, there is no expertise required with this appointment as there is with all of the other appointments of interested parties and we feel this appointment is insufficient to represent the business community at large. The business community is very diverse and there are many different sectors: manufacturing, hospitality, commercial, farming, natural resource-based industries, services sectors etc., with different issues with respect to the property tax burden. Members of Maine’s business community are vital stakeholders in this discussion as they contribute greatly to property taxes across the State.

At the very least, the Commission should include a small business voice, a large business voice, and a representative of the manufacturing sector under section 4. To create a credible plan, this Commission needs to ensure that all perspectives and input is integrated into this Commission’s final product.

I would be happy to answer any questions.

