



Testimony In Support of L.D. 2116

Chairwoman Grohoski, Chairman Sayre, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Taxation, my name is Nate Howes, a development officer at Avesta Housing and Maine Affordable Housing Coalition board member. Avesta is the largest non-profit affordable housing developer in Northern New England. We own and manage over 3,000 homes across Maine and New Hampshire with nearly 4,700 residents.

Avesta is offering testimony in strong support of **L.D. 2116 “An Act to Make Permanent the Affordable Housing Income Tax Credit”** and want to thank Rep. Rana for her sponsorship. This bill will make permanent the Affordable Housing Tax Credit that was created in 2019 and is due to expire in 2028. Housing development takes a lot of time and resources, and, because of this, it requires as much predictability as possible. By making this tax credit permanent now, ahead of its expiration in 2028, developers like Avesta can proceed confidently with predevelopment work required to position prospective housing developments for competitive MaineHousing applications in the years ahead.

The Affordable Housing Tax Credit was key to funding many developments since its inception, including two Avesta properties. Snow School, a 28-unit development for older adults, in Fryeburg would not have been possible without this tax credit program. The development was constructed on the site of its namesake, using a design that mimicked the former elementary school. As a result of the Affordable Housing Tax Credit, Avesta was able to leverage private investment and use State resources more efficiently to provide the first new housing in Oxford County for low-income older adults in a long time. It's been especially heartwarming to hear from residents who were once students at Snow School. Thanks to the state's investment, the site of a former school went from being a place where these residents once learned how to read to where they opened doors to their new homes.

This tax credit program was created at such a crucial time for Maine. As you know, we continue to face an unprecedented, nationwide housing crisis. By bringing predictability to the future of this tax credit program, you will help boost supply and open doors to Mainers looking for a safe, affordable home at time when the need is so great. For these reasons, Avesta urges your strong support of L.D. 2116.

Thank you for time and please let us know if we can answer any questions.

Sincerely,

Nate Howes
Senior Development Officer
Avesta Housing