



Providing Mental Health and Supportive
Living Services for Children and Adults

Central Office

P.O. Box 88
Kay Parker Building
26 Hadley Lake Road
Machias, ME 04654

tel: 207-255-8596
fax: 207-255-6110
deaf or hearing impaired
relay 800-457-1220

E-mail

bus. off: cenoff@sun-rise.tv
exec. dir: tmichaud@sun-rise.tv

Taxation Committee of the Maine Legislature

January 21, 2026

In Support of LD 2116

Good afternoon, Senator Grohowski, Representative Sayre, and members of the Taxation Committee.

My name is Thomas Michaud Jr., and I am the Executive Director of Sunrise Opportunities, which provides affordable housing in Washington County, Maine. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of LD 2116, which would remove the sunset on Maine's Affordable Housing Tax Credit.

Preserving existing affordable housing is one of the most urgent challenges we face. Throughout Washington County, we are seeing the impact of a housing crisis unfold including rising rents, long waitlists, and a lack of new construction. In our rural area displacement may mean moving far away from supports like family that can keep people living in their homes versus a higher level of care. For many residents, especially seniors, people with disabilities, and veterans, there are few alternatives if affordable homes are lost.

During our current housing crisis we must make every effort to offer tools to aid in creating and sustaining affordable housing. The Maine Affordable Housing Tax Credit is a critical tool that allows local housing agencies and mission-driven nonprofit organizations experienced with housing to step in when existing affordable housing properties are at risk. It helps make the acquisition and rehabilitation of affordable housing feasible, particularly in rural communities and in USDA-assisted properties, where financing options are limited.

Sunrise Opportunities is currently working to preserve units in Washington County which would not be possible without the program. Without our intervention the loss of the affordable status of the housing would be imminent and irreplaceable. More than 20 tenants would be looking for new housing that doesn't exist.

Maine's Affordable Housing Tax Credit is a tool to keep people in their homes now, and preserve affordable housing for the future – a future that has been increasingly unstable and shown sharply increasing rent rates due to rising construction costs. Preservation projects often take years to plan and finance. Removing the sunset, as LD 2116 proposes, gives predictability that this resource will be available in communities into the future, which is needed to responsibly plan projects, secure financing, and protect residents from displacement.

Preserving existing affordable housing is also a cost-effective strategy for the State. In many rural communities including Washington County, attracting developers to build new housing is extremely challenging. Funding opportunities to build and sustain affordable housing are few and far between. Once existing affordable homes are lost, they are rarely replaced.

For these reasons, Sunrise Opportunities strongly supports LD 2116 and asks the Committee to remove the sunset on Maine's Affordable Housing Tax Credit. This proven tool is essential to preserving housing stability and supporting healthy communities across Maine.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Thomas Michaud Jr." The signature is fluid and cursive, with "Thomas" and "Michaud" on the first line and "Jr." on the second line.

Thomas Michaud Jr.
Executive Director