

Ian Lynch
Waterville
LD 2124

Rev. Ian Lynch
Waterville, Maine
February 10, 2026

Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development. Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee. My name is Ian Lynch, I'm a resident of Waterville, and I speak as pastor of First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ. I write today in support of LD 2124 An Act to Support Emergency Shelter Funding Using Revenue from the Real Estate Transfer Tax.

Forty years ago, in my first setting in ministry, I served as the director of the homeless shelter that was an outreach of our congregation. It is a mixed blessing to celebrate that it continues to this day. Sadly, the need persists, but the faithfulness of volunteers and the community, coupled with consistent state contracts has meant that the basic needs of our most at risk neighbors are able to be met.

The truth is that despite the need for effective programs that help people move from being unhoused toward housing that can only be built on a system of well run, safe, homeless shelters. Ideally, in time the bulk of the funding can shift away from emergency intervention, but clearly the only moral choice is to ensure that an emergency response always exists.

One time infusions of money will never sustain an appropriate response, that is why this bill is so essential. Shelter providers deserve the promise of a predictable source of income. That is why I urge you to vote "ought to pass" on LD 2124.

Thank you.