

To: Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and the Joint Standing Committee of Housing and Economic Development

From: Nina Mitchell

Date: Thursday, February 19th, 2026

Re: Testimony in support of LD 2212: An Act Making Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2026, and June 30, 2027

Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, members of the joint standing committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs, and the joint standing committee of Housing and Economic Development. My name is Nina Mitchell. I am a resident of Orono, a student at Orono High School, and a Rural Youth Organizer for JustME for JustUS. I am writing in support of LD 2212.

I am here to support the housing investments in the proposed supplemental budget. Maine needs 80,000 homes by 2030, but we're only building about half of what's needed each year. Walking through downtown Bangor, you can see it firsthand: people freezing on the street in the middle of winter. I know hard-working families in my own town who can only afford public housing. Teachers, nurses, first responders, and young families are getting priced out, and in rural Maine, young people are less and less able to stay in the towns they grew up in.

I grew up not having to worry about whether my family could afford a place to live, and I know how lucky that is. But it's hard enough being a kid, going to school, keeping up with grades, and figuring out what comes next, without that uncertainty hanging over your family. Every kid deserves that stability.

The \$70 million in this budget would create or preserve hundreds of homes across Maine. State investment like this also unlocks federal dollars and private financing, so the impact goes further than the price tag suggests. Housing is infrastructure. It determines where people can live, work, and build a life.

For all the above reasons, I urge you to vote “ought to pass” on LD 2212.

Sincerely,

Nina Mitchell