



## Testimony in Support of LD 2224

March 5, 2026

Chair Curry, Chair Gere, and Honorable Members of the Housing and Economic Development Committee;

My name is Elizabeth Frazier and I am submitting testimony on behalf of AIA Maine, the professional association representing architects practicing across the State of Maine. AIA Maine supports LD 2224 and appreciates the legislature's continued attention to addressing regulatory barriers that affect the cost and feasibility of housing development in Maine. The bill reflects an important effort to examine how building codes and regulatory frameworks influence housing production.

As the Committee considers this legislation, AIA Maine encourages the inclusion of an additional provision allowing **single-stair residential buildings up to six stories**, which would provide greater design flexibility while maintaining modern life-safety standards and could help enable additional housing development in appropriate locations.

Many jurisdictions internationally—including much of Europe and parts of Canada—safely permit single-stair residential buildings of greater height than is commonly allowed under traditional U.S. building code frameworks. These buildings rely on robust fire-resistive construction, modern detection systems, compartmentalized floor plans, and other life-safety features to protect occupants.

Allowing this design option in Maine would provide architects and builders with greater flexibility to design efficient residential buildings, particularly on smaller or irregular urban sites where dual-stair requirements can significantly constrain building layout and reduce the number of feasible housing units.

Importantly, permitting single-stair buildings does not eliminate safety requirements. Buildings would continue to be subject to rigorous fire protection, structural, and other egress standards under the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code. From a design and planning perspective, this approach represents an opportunity to modernize elements of Maine's building code while maintaining strong life-safety protections and enabling more efficient housing development.

AIA Maine appreciates the legislature's attention to these issues and looks forward to continued discussion of code modernization strategies that support both safety and housing production.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Elizabeth Frazier, on behalf of AIA Maine