

March 5, 2026

Committee on Housing and Economic Development

Re: LD 2224 – An Act to Reduce Certain Costs Associated with Residential Construction

To Whom It May Concern,

Please accept this testimony as **strong support for LD 2224**.

As an architect whose practice focuses largely on housing development across Maine, I see daily how construction costs affect our ability to deliver much-needed homes. While building codes play a critical role in ensuring safety, the accumulation of additional requirements over time can significantly increase construction costs without always providing proportional benefits.

This gradual expansion of regulations can make the types of buildings that Maine communities have traditionally built—such as small apartment buildings and modest multi-family housing, more difficult or expensive to construct. Reviewing regulations to ensure they remain both effective and cost-appropriate is an important step toward addressing Maine’s housing shortage.

Specific comments:

Sec. 1 – 10 MRSA §9722 sub-6 B-1

Agricultural buildings serve a different purpose from residential and commercial structures, and exempting them from certain energy code requirements is reasonable.

Sec. 2 – 10 MRSA §9722 sub-6 B-1

Modern sprinklered buildings of four stories or more are among the safest building types today. Additional hoistway protection requirements have significant cost implications and should be carefully evaluated before being mandated.

Sec. 3 – 10 MRSA §9722 sub-6 B-1

Similarly, requiring two-way video communication systems in elevators adds cost but has not clearly demonstrated a meaningful increase in safety for typical residential buildings.

Sec. 5 – Sprinkler working group

I strongly support the creation of this working group. Decisions regarding sprinkler requirements across residential building types should be informed by careful analysis of cost, safety outcomes, and building performance.

Many of Maine’s most serious fire safety challenges occur in older buildings rather than in newly constructed apartment buildings that already meet modern code requirements. Focusing efforts on improving safety in existing buildings may produce greater public safety benefits than increasing requirements for new construction.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Virginie Stanley, Architect

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