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Testimony in Opposition to LD 214 (“An Act to Amend the Laws Regarding Zoning and Land Use Restrictions to Limit Certain Requirements to Municipalities with a Population of More than 10,000”) and LD 1154 (“An Act Regarding Accessory Dwelling Units and Municipal Zoning Ordinances”)

J. Andrew Cashman on behalf of the Maine Association of REALTORS®

April 11, 2023

Senator Pierce, Representative Gere and members of the Joint Select Committee on Housing, my name is Andy Cashman. I am the Founder of Resolve Government Relations. We represent the Maine Association of REALTORS®, a professional trade association established in 1936 with over 6,500 members statewide. REALTORS® grow Maine's economy and build Maine communities. Our members represent buyers and sellers involved in both residential and commercial real estate transactions. Our membership also includes industry affiliates, such as lenders, closing agents, title agents, appraisers, building inspectors, surveyors, etc. The Maine Association is chartered by the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR), the largest trade association in the country.

The Maine Association of REALTORS® opposes LD 214 and LD 1154. Both bills represent a weakening of key provisions of the landmark legislation sponsored by former Speaker Fecteau last session (Public Law Chapter 672, “An Act To Implement the Recommendations of the Commission To Increase Housing Opportunities in Maine by Studying Zoning and Land Use Restrictions”).

PL 672 was a historic step in the right direction to address Maine's significant need for housing. One critical reason for Maine's housing shortage is restrictive zoning that inhibits development of additional affordable housing units. Last session's bill included key provisions to prohibit restrictive municipal zoning and spur affordable housing development: specifically, requiring municipalities to allow Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and the allowance of up to four units on a single lot located in an economic development zone. These provisions are critical because, without them, we had a patch work of restrictions with many municipalities prohibiting development and thus adding to Maine's housing shortage. PL 672 is an example of policy-making that respects incremental growth and community integrity, but also boldly addresses the housing needs of today and tomorrow. LD 214 would limit the provisions of PL 672 to municipalities with populations greater than 10,000. This change if enacted, would impact hundreds of municipalities, and thus thousands of people seeking housing. Similarly, LD 1154 would make those provisions optional rather than mandatory. Both would be negative policy measures that halt change and continue more of the same issues that hinder housing. Restrictive zoning inhibits housing development and prevents economic stability and growth in communities.



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The Maine Association of REALTORS® believes that every individual should have opportunities to live in safe, decent, and affordable housing. We urge the adoption and integration of housing policies that respond to the individual and collective housing needs of our state. PL 672 does this but has not had a chance to affect any positive changes yet in our communities due to its delayed implementation.

For that reason, we oppose LD 214 and LD 1154. Please do not support regressive zoning policy that will only serve to add to Maine's housing shortage. We respectfully urge you to vote Ought Not to Pass. Thank you for your time and consideration.