

April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Senator Teresa Pierce, Senate Chair  
Representative Traci Gere, House Chair  
Committee On Housing  
100 State House Station  
Augusta, Maine 04333

**RE: MSCC Testimony in OPPOSITION to L.D. 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**

**MSCC Testimony in OPPOSITION to L.D. 665, An Act to Extend the Date by Which Compliance is Required for Affordable Housing Development, Increased Numbers of Dwelling Units and Accessory Dwelling Units**

**MSCC Testimony in OPPOSITION to L.D. 1154, An Act Regarding Accessory Dwelling Units and Municipal Zoning Ordinances**

Senator Pierce, Representative Gere, and members of the Committee on Housing:

My name is Ben Lucas, I live in Portland, and I represent the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, a statewide business organization consisting of a network of more than 5,000 small and large employers across Maine. The Maine State Chamber of Commerce is submitting testimony in opposition to L.D. 214, 665, 1154.

In the 130<sup>th</sup> Legislature, the Chamber and a diverse coalition of various business associations worked incredibly hard to pass L.D. 2003. Under the leadership of the then Speaker Ryan Fecteau, it was the most significant piece of housing legislation enacted to date. The Chamber is strongly opposed to efforts to try and roll back the changes of L.D. 2003. We strongly believe that efforts to update some out-of-date zoning regulations would help spark greater development of housing in Maine. Our housing problems stem from the lack of supply of housing. We have the demand, but not the supply and we need to change that.

In Maine's economic development strategic plan, the need for workforce housing is clear. 65,000 Mainers will be leaving the workforce this decade. We'll need at least that many people to move in to fill those jobs. Where will they live? There is a clear link between housing and our workforce needs. Ask any Maine employer what is holding back their ability to hire, and this is what is on their mind: housing. I believe this is an area where Maine has potential for progress, but regulation has historically stood in the way of making that progress

possible. L.D. 2003 helped cut some red tape and allow more homes to be built. Housing supply is not just a social issue in Maine, it's an economic issue.

Over the summer months, we conducted our annual, "Making Maine Work Report" which is a survey we put out to our members every four years to learn about what issues are most important to the business community. In the 2022 survey, the workforce challenges were the top issue for businesses in Maine, and that housing was a critical solution indicated in the report.

In closing, we oppose L. D's 214, 665, and 1154 because we need to give time for the previous changes to go into effect and see the results of them. Housing is critical to the future of Maine, and we should be taking proactive steps to address the needs of Maine, not reverse previous actions. We encourage the committee to vote, "ought not to pass".

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I am happy to answer any questions and bring back additional information for the work session.

Sincerely,  
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Maine State Chamber of Commerce  
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