

131st Legislature

Joint Select Committee on Housing

Testimony of Drew Wing, President of Zachau Construction, Maine Affordable Housing Committee Board Member on April 14, 2023 in favor of LD226 an **Act to Address Maine's Affordable Housing Crisis**

Good morning, Senator Pierce, Representative Gere, and Members of the Joint Select Committee on Housing. My name is Drew Wing, I am the President of Zachau Construction and a Board Member for the Maine Affordable Housing Coalition. Thank you for a few moments of your time and your dedication to working on this most important crisis.

You are all aware of the supporting data and I won't belabor what is an established fact. When our children cannot find housing in their home state, we have a crisis. When our Parents, or Grand Parents cannot find safe and affordable housing we have a crisis. When we have tents lining 295 and large encampments through the dark nights of winter, we have a crisis. When people who want to move and work here to help fill the jobs we so desperately need to fill cannot because they can't afford a place to live, we have a crisis. When a single mother lives in a truck behind the town drugstore with her two children, we have a crisis.

Here is the good news- we can fix it. Maine has an incredible community dedicated to the creation of this housing. From Maine State Housing to our private and non-profit developers, to the general contractors, subcontractors and trades people that build it- we have the talent, dedication, experience and the collaborative environment to make it happen.

What we need is certainty. There is no doubt that the capacity is there. When Maine Housing has certainty in funding, experienced developers advance rapidly with creative projects, when developers receive a commitment on funding, we secure a place in our pipeline to ensure we have the resources to build it. Certainty- provides continuity, continuity is essential to the development process. The passing of LD2226 will provide this required certainty.

There is currently tremendous uncertainty with rising interest rates and inflationary pressures. developer, lenders and investors across other market segments are taking pause. This is a critical and opportune time to provide certainty to affordable housing.

In closing and a slight modification from the classic film, Field of Dreams- "Fund it and they will come"

Thank you.