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Testimony of Rep. Rebecca Millett presenting
LD 1540, An Act to Create the Stable Home Fund
Before the Joint Select Committee on Housing

Good morning, Senator Pierce, Representative Gere and esteemed members of the Joint Select Committee on Housing. My name is Rebecca Millett and I represent House District 123, which is most of Cape Elizabeth. I am honored to present **LD 1540, An Act to Create the Stable Home Fund**.

Last week I was before you with a bill that seeks to make a critical investment into growing our affordable housing stock to help Mainers who are getting priced out of their communities and our state and to have affordable housing available for folks who want to move to Maine to work and live.

LD 1540 is another critical piece of the housing puzzle. Increasing housing construction is essential, so too is preventing folks from being evicted from their homes while we are working to ease the housing crunch.

The federal program providing rental support ended in December, and the growth in filed evictions is significant. In the last four months, as compared to the same months before the pandemic, Androscoggin County saw an increase of 52%, Aroostook 57%, Cumberland 83%, Hancock 86%, Penobscot 62% and 41% for Maine as a whole. These numbers are harrowing, as is what it says about what is playing out in households across our state.

This bill creates the Stable Home Fund and the Stable Home Fund Program within the Maine State Housing Authority to provide persons earning up to 60% of the median income for an area as defined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development with \$300 per month in rental assistance paid directly to the landlord for up to 24 months or until those persons secure housing by means of a housing voucher. Because of the emergency nature of our current situation, the program is designed to present minimal barriers for landlord participation and some flexibility in the delegation of the administration of the programs in order to get relief out to residents as expeditiously as possible.

There will be folks testifying today that have much expertise to share and experience with current efforts to keep people in their homes and the challenges faced. I am so very grateful for all of their work during these difficult times. The task before us is monumental, but I have hope that with a strategic yet holistic approach we can make a difference.

I thank you for your consideration and hope that you will join me in support of LD 1540.