



STATE OF MAINE  
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF POLICY INNOVATION AND THE FUTURE  
181 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, MAINE  
04333-0181

Testimony In Opposition To  
**L.D. 1593, An Act to Increase Affordable Housing Development**

April 25, 2023

Senator Pierce, Representative Gere, and distinguished members of the Joint Select Committee on Housing, my name is Greg Payne and I serve as the Senior Advisor on Housing Policy in the Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future. I am here today to offer testimony in opposition to **L.D. 1593, An Act to Increase Affordable Housing Development**.

This proposal seeks to eliminate the density bonus adopted last year as part of L.D. 2003, the landmark law which reduces regulatory barriers to housing. The density bonus allows for a developer to achieve 2.5x the base density within a jurisdiction if the proposed housing meets certain affordability requirements. For example, if a developer proposed to build housing on a lot which has a density limit of 10 units, he or she would be eligible to build up to 25 housing units so long as the affordability requirements of L.D. 2003 are also met. L.D. 1593 would eliminate this key provision from L.D. 2003, taking our state backwards in efforts to address our housing shortage.

In addition, this bill proposes to allow residential construction in any zoning district. This would result in a mandate on municipalities requiring them to permit residential construction in conservation, commercial, industrial, and agricultural districts. Such an expansive allowance would disrupt community planning, mitigation of sprawl, and threaten protected habitat and working farmland. The proposal runs counter to pairing most housing with designated growth areas and access to public water/sewer systems.

Finally, for the organized municipalities statewide, the proposed language does not appear to help with multiple unit housing development per conversations we've had with staff at DACF. Rather, the proposal leaves a multiple unit housing activity in the "any land use activity" category with no direction for how to compute the waste disposal requirements. It would thus make it more difficult to determine and to obtain approval rather than making it easier to obtain such approval.

For these reasons, we oppose L.D. 1593. Thank you for consideration and I'd be happy to answer any questions.