



Planning & Code Enforcement
2 York Street
Westbrook, Maine 04092
Phone: 207-854-0638
Fax: 866-559-0642

PLANNING & CODE ENFORCEMENT

DATE: April 24, 2023

Senator Teresa Pierce
Representative Traci Gere
Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Housing - Room 216

RE: LD 1593 - An Act to Increase Affordable Housing Development

Senator Pierce, Representative Gere, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Housing:

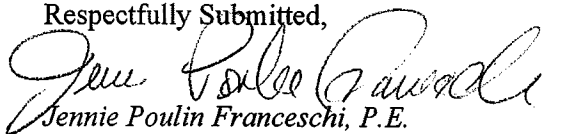
My name is Jennie Poulin Franceschi. I am the Director of Planning and Code Enforcement for the City of Westbrook, and I would like to provide testimony regarding LD1593 An Act to Increase Affordable Housing Development with the recommendation of OUGHT NOT TO PASS, as drafted. However if amended to only include the striking included in the document in 30-A MSRA Section 4364 subsection 2 Density Requirements, we would support the bill.

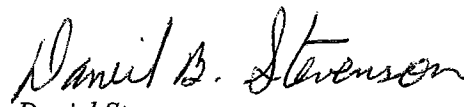
The current legislation provides a provision that essentially removes zoning at the local level. Placement of residential in specific areas of a community is consistent with comprehensive planning as well as compatibility of uses. Industrial/manufacturing districts are an important part of any community, which assist in providing a balanced tax base, as well as an area of the community where these high intensity uses are allowed to operate without being in direct conflict residential uses. Any community is capable of changing their zoning to allow for a mix of use, but to mandate state law on this matter does not work for every municipality in Maine.

For example, the operations of a gravel pit, a high truck traffic use operating 24/7 or other use that is clearly in conflict with adjacency of residential uses, these operators need to have their rights protected to continue operations and not have constant complaints from uses that were never intended to operate side by side. We most certainly see the value in mixed use zoning, but not all uses are innately compatible, and that was the initial premise of zoning in general.

We thank you for your time and consideration of our comments. I am available to the committee for any questions.

Respectfully Submitted,


Jennie Poulin Franceschi, P.E.
Director of Planning and Code Enforcement


Daniel Stevenson
Director of Economic Development