



Megan Hannan, Executive Director  
Maine Community Action Partnership  
176 Washington St.  
Bath ME 04530  
207-831-9893

Jason Parent, CEO/Executive Director  
Aroostook County Action Program, Inc.  
771 Main St.  
Presque Isle, ME 04769  
207-764-3721

James Martin, CEO  
Community Concepts, Inc.  
240 Bates Street  
Lewiston, ME 04240  
207-739-6553

Rebecca Palmer, Executive Director  
Downeast Community Partners  
248 Bucksport Road  
Ellsworth, ME 04605  
207-610-5904

Suzanne Walsh, CEO  
Kennebec Valley Community Action Program  
97 Water Street  
Waterville, ME 04901  
207-859-1579

Claire Berkowitz, President & CEO  
Midcoast Maine Community Action  
34 Wing Farm Parkway  
Bath, ME 04530  
207-442-7963

Joe Everett, President & CEO  
Opportunity Alliance  
50 Lydia Lane  
South Portland, ME 04106  
207-523-5055

Kara Hay, President & CEO  
Penquis  
262 Harlow St.  
Bangor, ME 04402  
207-973-3500

Donna Kelley, President & CEO  
Waldo Community Action Partners  
9 Field St.  
Belfast, ME 04915  
207-338-6809

Jim Trundy, Executive Director  
Western Maine Community Action, Inc.  
1A Church St.  
East Wilton, ME 04234  
207-743-7763

Carter Friend, Executive Director  
York County Community Action Corporation  
6 Spruce St.  
Sanford, ME 04073  
207-324-5762

## **Maine Community Action Partnership Supports LD 1710 An Act to Establish the Maine Rental Assistance and Guarantee Program and Amend the Laws Regarding Tenants and the Municipal General Assistance Program**

**May 12, 2023**

Senator Pierce, Representative Gere, members of the Committee on Housing, I am Megan Hannan, Executive Director of the Maine Community Action Partnership and we support LD 1710 An Act to Establish the Maine Rental Assistance and Guarantee Program and Amend the Laws Regarding Tenants and the Municipal General Assistance Program.

Our state's greatest resource is our people, and our state's policies shape people's possibilities. In Community Action, we create conditions that invite children to learn and adults to apply their skills, tapping into the deep-rooted potential in our communities. Through our Whole Family approach, we build a family's capacity for sustained stability and economic growth. We invest in the family's well-being, we let them drive their own story, and we have tangible success.

Despite that, Maine rents are too high for most Mainers, low- and middle-income. Households with very low incomes are facing eviction at a much higher rate than others, and those with children are in even higher risk situations. As I have discussed here earlier, poverty, unstable housing and lack of support are a recipe for adverse childhood events (ACEs) that follow children for the rest of their lives.

LD 1710 can help to avert that by providing rental assistance, allowing families to continue to work and study and be able to buy food, clothing and other necessities. More than half of low-income households are paying more than half of their income in rent. That leaves precious little for the rest of their needs. We do have some support for families in place, but too few to meet all of the needs, and too few families take advantage of them.

Landlords will also benefit by having stable families in their units. Unfortunately, some landlords choose not to rent to those with housing vouchers or assistance – interestingly the opposite of what we saw with the Federally funded rental assistance program during the pandemic. A new, tightly focused program would keep people in their homes, not be seen as a massive giveaway that leads to even higher rents.

Thank you for your time and attention.

**Megan Hannan**  
[mhannan@mecap.org](mailto:mhannan@mecap.org)  
207.831.9893