

Senator Pierce, Representative Gere, and honorable members of the Committee on Housing. My name is Ed Fallon, I am a Veteran, and I live in Lewiston, and I am here to testify in favor of LD 1710.

A few years ago, I was evicted from my apartment in Weymouth, Massachusetts simply because I was recovering from major surgery and could not do "things" my landlord thought I should do. Fortunately, my granddaughters in Maine moved me up here and found me housing. Not always safe and decent, but places where I could recuperate and get back on my feet. Unfortunately, many other Veterans are not so lucky. Many are homeless and struggle to get their basic needs met. We now have an opportunity to do better. Let us act now by supporting LD 1710!

Evictions are traumatic events. I personally experienced it. It caused me to lose some of my possessions, and prevented me from taking care of myself, especially my health. Again, we must do better and must prevent such needless harm.

A housing shortage was obviously many years in the making. The pandemic has made the situation worse. Maine is also vulnerable to evictions that further this crisis. Nearly 60% of extremely low-income families, including Veterans, contribute at least 50% of their income to rent housing, often going without other basic necessities. That is NOT right! Section 8 has not adequately addressed this issue.

I now live in relatively stable Public Housing. Unfortunately, we have been informed that it is being torn down. Where am I to live? Where can I go? Maine needs an influx of affordable housing at all levels of the economic scale. Now is the time to act to help all Mainers! Please vote ought to pass on LD 1710.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak in front of your Committee. I strongly encourage you to support this critical housing bill. I will attempt to answer any questions you may have. Thank you!

Ed Fallon

Lewiston