



Testimony of John Egan  
On behalf of the Genesis Community Loan Fund

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs

*In support of LD 258, An Act Making Unified Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of State Government, General Fund and Other Funds, and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2024 and June 30, 2025*

May 18, 2023

Good afternoon Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachs, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs. I'm John Egan and I'm the Senior Program Officer for Strategic Initiatives at the Genesis Community Loan Fund.

The Genesis Fund is a nonprofit Community Development Financial Institution that connects communities with the capital and expertise they need to create affordable housing and other essential community resources. We have a 30-year track record of providing financing as well as expert project assistance to nonprofit organizations and mission-oriented developers throughout Maine and Northern New England.

Today, I speak in support of LD 258. I am asking you to appropriate the significant funding that is so urgently needed to help Maine developers create housing statewide, including in places that haven't seen the development of new affordable housing in a very long time.

I appreciate that in this session, members of the Legislature have sought information, asked excellent questions, and deliberated thoughtfully on how best to address the critical need for affordable housing in every region of our state.

I know you've heard stories about how Maine's housing crisis is at the center of challenges across communities. You've heard heartbreaking stories about how our state's lack of housing is taking a toll on people's health and wellbeing. You've heard data and reports about how worker shortages are taking a toll on Maine's economy.

In previous hearings, you've heard from small-scale developers who stand ready to build housing that workers, older Mainers, and others can afford. They've put together plans for projects in places like Houlton, Washburn, Winslow, Carrabassett Valley, Springvale, and many other rural communities in need of affordable housing.

Developers who have more typically built market-rate housing are ready now to create affordable units for the benefit of rural as well as urban communities. It's significant that the Rural Affordable Rental Housing program creates the opportunity for developers who are new to MaineHousing, and new to creating affordable housing, to enter this market. These developers are now part of the community of people working in our state to address Maine's housing crisis.

But they can't complete planned projects without funding.

That is why I urge you to support LD 258. By doing so, you will ensure Maine expands housing now, and you will fund programs that are building our state's capacity to create affordable housing for years to come.

Thank you.