

STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR LD #1931 LEGISLATION:

As President of Mountainside Community Cooperative, I would like to speak in favor of the LD # 1931 legislation for manufactured housing communities.

We are a senior 55 + community with 52 owner occupied homes located in Mid-Coast Maine. As a Resident Owned Community, (ROC), Mountainside provides secure affordable housing for its resident members.

In 2019 due to health reasons, our former owner was forced to retire. Our park is in a premium coastal real-estate location making us vulnerable to many forms of development. Fortunately, he cared for the future of the park that he had owned and maintained for over 25 years and for its residents who had chosen Mountainside to stabilize their retirement years. Rather than listing the property, opening it up to the highest bidder or a developer, he contacted Cooperative Development Institute (CDI) paving the way for current residents to purchase the park at a fair market value.

Assisted by CDI/ROC and after many community meetings the residents of Mountainside had become a not-for-profit corporation, set up governance, formed a management team and obtained financing. On December 11, 2019, we became owners of the land beneath our homes. What does that mean?

Permanent tenancy based on carefully drafted bylaws and rules.

Stability of monthly lot fees based only on the actual cost of maintaining the property and saving for future capital improvements.

52 homes occupied by responsible homeowners and taxpayers.

When a manufactured housing property goes on the market the seller makes their profit and the new owner wants to maximize their investment. The ones who pay the price are the residents within the parks. Depending on the plans of new owners, the very ability to remain in their homes is often jeopardized. Without the requirement for a private entity to maximize a profit level, we can affordably manage our community needs as we maintain, plan, and save for future improvements.

This legislation gives a voice to those in manufactured housing communities toward their own future if they choose to take the initiative.

Thank you for your consideration.

Margaret Jones, Board President

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