



MAINE MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION SINCE 1936

60 Community Drive | Augusta, ME 04330-9486
1-800-452-8786 (in state) | (t) 207-623-8428
(f) 207-624-0129

Testimony of the Maine Municipal Association (MMA) Neither For Nor Against

LD 326, An Act to Increase the Property Tax Exemption Provided to Individuals Who Are Legally Blind

February 11, 2025

Senator Grohoski, Representative Cloutier and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Taxation, my name is Amanda Campbell, and I am submitting testimony on behalf of the Maine Municipal Association's 70-member Legislative Policy Committee (LPC) neither for nor against LD 326.

This session, the LPC proactively established a platform of bills intended to bolster and support the property taxpayers of Maine. Through initiatives across the legislative board, they are committed to protecting the interests of their residents and to reducing the burden of property taxes.

LD 326 aims to increase the property tax exemption for persons who are legally blind from \$4,000 to \$10,000 of the taxpayer's assessed value. Currently, municipalities are reimbursed for no portion of this exemption as it was instituted prior to the constitutional reimbursement requirement. That said, the new portion of the exemption, or the property tax loss that would result from the \$6,000 increase would have to be reimbursed by at least 50%.

Members of the LPC were polled regarding LD 326 and the feedback received argued that an increase in the value of the homestead exemption would benefit all taxpayers, not just a select few. While it is understood that those who are legally blind certainly have very specific needs that a targeted exemption could address, the revenue loss associated with the exemption is offset by increased property taxes on the entire community, including those who receive the targeted benefit. Exemptions equal property tax shifts, no matter who the exemption is intended to benefit.

Municipal officials agree that addressing the property tax burden of Maine citizens is critical and would encourage an increase in exemptions that can benefit a larger group of taxpayers rather than a targeted group.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you and share the municipal perspective on this important topic. Please feel free to contact me or any member of the MMA Advocacy team with any questions related to municipal operations.