

Blum, Alyster

From: Allen Downs <agdowns53@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 31, 2025 9:19 PM
To: Cmte HED
Subject: LD#1106, An Act to Provide for the Redevelopment of the Island Nursing Home in Hancock County into Affordable Senior Housing

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This message originates from outside the Maine Legislature.

Dear Members of the Housing and Economic Development Committee,

As an EMT working on Deer Isle in a volunteer ambulance service, I see first hand the living conditions and the healthcare needs of some of our seniors.

Since the closing of the Island Nursing Home in 2021, many of our island seniors who then resided in that skilled nursing facility have had to make due with the care that they can get from family, friends and visiting resources, or relocate to a facility well away from our community and in greater isolation. That closure was a great loss. Also, many other island seniors who might benefit from a congregate living facility try to stay in their homes as long as possible despite declining health. These latter seniors rely on the limited support from our Community Paramedicine weekly visitation service and they reach out to our local EMS agency, Memorial Ambulance Corps, when they experience acute worsening of their chronic medical conditions or injury from their housing situations, resulting in disruption, emotional trauma, utilization of resources, and expense. "Aging in place" is not an adequate substitute for a congregate living facility to meet the needs of many of our seniors.

Please support the work of our local community through appropriating state funding to help revitalize a valuable local resource as a senior housing facility that can help keep seniors in our community, better manage their health in a congregate setting, and help to prevent premature decline of members in this vulnerable population due to neglect or loneliness which is a key risk determinant of health (<https://www.cdc.gov/social-connectedness/risk-factors/index.html>). Our community is blessed with many dedicated leaders who support the needs of our aging population, but there is much more to do and they can not do it alone. Additional resources are needed now as much as ever following the stresses of Covid-19 and shifting healthcare services, and their on-going impact on local housing.

Please help us help others. Thank you,

Allen Downs
Deer isle