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2 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002
(207) 287-1400
TTY: MAINE RELAY 711

Melanie Sachs

84 Kelsey Ridge Road
Freeport, ME 04032
Residence: 207-299-6825
Melanie.Sachs@legislature.maine.gov

April 3, 2025

**Testimony of Representative Melanie Sachs in support of
*LD 1170, An Act to Make the Maine Redevelopment Land Bank Authority Responsible for the
Transfer and Development of State-owned Surplus Land*
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development**

Senator Curry, Representative Gere and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development, my name is Melanie Sachs and I am honored to represent the community of Freeport in the Maine Legislature.

I am before you today in strong support of *LD 1170, An Act to Make the Maine Redevelopment Land Bank Authority Responsible for the Transfer and Development of State-owned Surplus Land*.

I am here to hopefully save this committee a wee bit of time, and at the same time, pass good policy.

The bill before you, LD 1170, replaces the Maine State Housing Authority with the Maine Redevelopment Land Bank Authority (MRLBA) as the state agency responsible for the transfer and development of state-owned surplus land and proposes several updates to Title 5 MRSA §1742, sub-§23.

That same title (Title 5 MRSA §1742, sub-§23) requires the Bureau of General Services (BGS) to “periodically inventory” other agencies to determine if it is surplus:

23. Inventory of land. To periodically inventory all land owned by any state agency and, together with other state agencies, determine land that is needed by state agencies for other uses and land that is surplus.

I have a companion bill, *LD 1338, Resolve, Directing State Agencies and Semiautonomous State Agencies to Provide a List of Surplus Properties and Properties Eligible for Redevelopment to the Maine Redevelopment Land Bank Authority*, which, as drafted, directs BGS and other semiautonomous agencies to send that list once to the MRLBA. Semiautonomous agencies are defined in Title 5, section 1972, subsection 9, as “an agency created by an act of the Legislature that is not a part of the Executive Department. This term does not include the

Legislature, Judicial Department, Department of the Attorney General, Department of the Secretary of State, Office of the Treasurer of State and Office of the State Auditor.”

After the bill was drafted, I spoke with the liaison for the Bureau of General Services and discussed the bill, and the parameters around “periodically”. I was informed that this is part of the regular flow of work, with surplus properties rarely becoming available. I asked if it is a heavy lift for the agency to send this list to MRLBA annually, and was told this would be “very easy” to do.

I thus offer a friendly amendment to LD 1170, with the agreement of the sponsor, to tweak this statute to codify this activity, and have that same list sent annually to MRLBA, as well this committee (which is also a proposal in my bill):

23. Inventory of land. To ~~periodically~~ annually inventory all land owned by any state agency or semiautonomous state agency ~~as and~~, together with other state and semiautonomous agencies, determine land that is needed by state agencies for other uses and land that is surplus. Prior to offering any land for sale, the commissioner shall review with the ~~Maine State Housing Authority~~ Maine Redevelopment Land Bank Authority and other state and semiautonomous agencies the information derived from the inventory.

A. ~~By February 1, 1988, the commissioner shall provide an initial report on the status of the land inventory to the joint standing committees of the Legislature having jurisdiction over economic development, state and local government, and appropriations and financial affairs.~~

A-1. The department shall send the inventory annually to the Maine Redevelopment Land Bank Authority and to the joint standing committee having jurisdiction over housing.

My bill, LD 1338, would not be necessary if these changes are incorporated in LD 1170.

Thank you for your time and for the opportunity to submit this bill for your consideration.