

***Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs***

*Testimony of Drew Wing, President Zachau Construction*

**4.9.25**

***in favor of LD690 - An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Provide Funding for Affordable and Low-income Housing Programs - Sen. Teresa Pierce of Cumberland***

Good morning, Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs.

First, thank you for your service and dedication to working through these most important challenges. My name is Drew Wing and I'm the President of Zachau Construction in Freeport.

And I'm here to speak in support of LD690

Earlier this year when I heard about the permanent establishment of the Housing and Economic Development Committee I was incredibly encouraged because the simple naming of that committee seemed to recognize a basic truth that we had apparently lost sight of for far too long. That truth, which is now glaringly obvious is that we cannot have a thriving economy and vibrant communities with a deficit of housing.

Maine People and Maine Businesses from across the state have made the connection recognizing that we cannot hire the people we need to provide the services we want and need.

Our businesses, our communities, Maine people suffer as a result.

The commissioned report conducted by HR&A estimates 80,000 housing units needed by 2030.

We are currently looking at production rates of 750-1100 units per year being constructed through the utilization of MSHA projects.

Those numbers are 3X4 times greater than pre-pandemic production numbers. It is expected that without significant state investment such as this bond those numbers will decline to pre-pandemic numbers.

I would propose that going backwards on housing production is simply not an option that Maine can afford.

I recognize the challenge and many competing priorities for limited funding that this committee must deliberate upon, I would propose that this is a foundational investment and the health of our businesses and communities will be built upon meeting the very basic human need for a home. - Thank you.