



Craig V. Hickman
Senator, District 14

THE MAINE SENATE
132nd Legislature

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Augusta, Maine 04333

Testimony of Senator Craig V. Hickman introducing
LD 1282, "An Act Regarding Eligibility for Historic Preservation Bond Proceeds,"
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs
Thursday, April 10, 2025

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, my name is Craig Hickman, and I am proud to represent Senate District 14, twelve municipalities in southern Kennebec County including my beloved hometown of Winthrop and the neighboring town of Monmouth. Thank you for the opportunity to introduce LD 1282, "An Act Regarding Eligibility for Historic Preservation Bond Proceeds."

"Do you favor a \$10,000,000 bond issue to restore historic buildings owned by governmental and nonprofit organizations, with funds being issued contingent on a 25% local market match requirement from either private or nonprofit sources?"

When you read this, did you think that it would apply solely to buildings listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places?

If you answered "No," then you would be in the same boat as many of my constituents.

I will now read part of the Secretary of State's Maine Citizen's Guide to the Referendum Election about this question and its "Intent and Content," as prepared by the Office of the Attorney General (page 15):

"This Act would authorize the State to issue general obligation bonds in an amount not to exceed \$10 million, to restore historic buildings. ... Proceeds from the sale of these bonds would be administered by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission.

"Purpose. The purpose of the bond issue is to fund the restoration of historic buildings. The buildings may be owned by governmental or nonprofit organizations."

The Maine Historic Preservation Commission issued initial guidance saying that grant applicants would have to be on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, as has been the case for most, if not all, of their past grant opportunities.

This has concerned some of my constituents who are stewards of historic buildings that are not eligible for the National Register but *are* owned by local governments or nonprofits, including the Monmouth Academy and the Winthrop Grange. They have expressed to me that they would not have

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voted for the bond question had they known that eligibility would be limited to National Register-eligible buildings. I am presenting this bill on their behalf in an attempt to remedy what they believe was a misleading question on the ballot.

LD 1282 would expand eligibility for grants from the November 2024 bond question to include properties that have been designated as historic by a municipal historic preservation ordinance. Municipalities can find information about model historic preservation ordinances on the Maine Historic Preservation Commission's [website](#).

Additionally, [Title 30-A](#) talks further about the power of municipalities to write these ordinances.

None of us have any say in the outcome of the grant process, and so I will not comment on any specific property that my constituents may discuss with you today. However, it's safe to say that many of the buildings that could be considered under the broader eligibility guidelines in LD 1282 serve impactful purposes in their communities.

Please join me in voting unanimously to honor the will of Maine voters and ensure the bond does what many thought it would do.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to introduce this bill. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Craig V. Hickman
State Senator, District 14