



James Libby, Ph.D.  
Senator, District 22

**THE MAINE SENATE**  
132nd Legislature

3 State House Station  
Augusta, Maine 04333

**LD 1417, "An Act to Strengthen the Authority of Local Officials to Enforce  
Provisions Regarding Dangerous and Nuisance Properties that  
Constitute a Threat to Public Health and Safety"**

**Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government**

Public Hearing

Monday, April 14, 2025

Senator Baldacci, Representative Salisbury, and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government:

My name is Jim Libby; I am the State Senator representing District 22, comprised of the towns of Naples, Sebago, Baldwin, and Standish in Cumberland County; Hiram and Porter in Oxford County; and Limington, Limerick, Cornish, Parsonsfield, Newfield, Acton, and Shapleigh in the County of York.

It is my honor to sponsor LD 1417, "An Act to Strengthen the Authority of Local Officials to Enforce Provisions Regarding Dangerous and Nuisance Properties that Constitute a Threat to Public Health and Safety."

As many of you experience in your roles as senators and representatives, the problem of neglect of property has become a difficult issue for municipalities in Maine to face.

Over the past three years, I have visited constituent towns and met with local officials who feel stymied over what to do about depreciating homes that are often leased out for a very low rent. While we all seek to respect the privacy of homeowners and rental properties, it is an unfortunate fact that sometimes properties are affected by human behavior. There are hoarders, for example, in many towns. Sometimes people who are struggling with substance use allow properties to devalue and depreciate. Indeed, in some cases, some residents are purposely utilizing property as flop houses, or they are dealing drugs from within.

The biggest losers in this experience are neighbors. When neighbors see neighbors exhibit dangerous behaviors, what do they do? Some will ask for a meeting with their neighbor. When that does not work, I have both constituents and friends who have explained to me about their efforts to contact health officials, a sheriff's office, and the Maine State Police. They usually are unable to make headway. Ultimately, they end up at town hall/city hall.