

Testimony of Vicki Dill in favor of LD 1226: An Act to Protect Consumers by Licensing Residential Building Contractors. April 17, 2025

Good afternoon Senator Curry, Representative Gere and distinguished members of the Housing and Economic Development Committee. My name is Vicki Dill. I am writing today in support of LD 1226: An Act to Protect Consumers by Licensing Residential Building Contractors. This is a sensible and much needed law for Maine.

In early 2021, I sold the home I was living in to build my retirement home, on the property I grew up on. I hired a contractor, whom I knew from high school, and we shook hands, and the work would begin in the spring. Well, since early 2021, I have been essentially homeless.

I am a victim of an unlicensed building contractor, who took full advantage of me. I gave the contractor my floor plans, a simple ranch- style house built on a slab. No second floor, no basement, just a simple one-story home. He even commented on how much he loved my floor plans. We agreed on a price, shook hands, and the work began.

For a couple of months, the groundwork was looking good, but as the actual building of my house began, he began to make excuses as to why he couldn't work on any given day. This contractor would show up on a Monday, work for 2 or 3 hours and then tell me he needed money to go buy material. I would go to the bank and get a check from my savings and give it to him. Each check was in the amount of 10 or \$15,000.00 There was little to no progress on building all summer long.

In September, he stopped working at my house for about 3 weeks. He was finishing up another project, I was told. In October, he bought land approximately 4 miles from my house, and started to build his own house, using my floor plans. In December of 2021, he moved into his house. My house was still completely unfinished and in disrepair, as it was not sealed up and getting weathered. The garage trusses, what few were installed, have caved in on themselves. Needless to say, I am not living in my house, the house I have paid for.

That contractor stopped all contact with me by January of 2022. To date, I have not spoken with him. I have lost a substantial amount of money from all of this. I contacted the Sheriff's office to report this, as my loss was over \$135,000.00. I am devastated that I have lost my entire life savings, that was to be used to build my simple retirement home.

I support this bill, for the fact that I am not the only one who has been scammed by a contractor that is not reliable. I believe this bill will allow homeowners the assurance they need, so that contractors, along with plumbers and electricians that are licensed, will be held accountable for their work. A licensed contractor should have insurance to cover any issues with a bad or defective building.

I ask you, the members of this committee, to consider supporting this bill. It will help provide a safety net for the 1.3 million citizens of our state. As Representatives and Senators, please consider your constituents and their peace of mind. I will attest that I have spoken with more reputable contactors, and they support this bill as well.

I welcome any questions you may have for me. My contact information is below.

I appreciate your time and consideration on this very important bill.

Vicki Dill

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