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# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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**Testimony of Representative Traci Gere Introducing LD 1385  
An Act to Consider Municipalities Meeting Regional Housing Goals in Awarding  
Transportation Grants  
April 25, 2025**

Good afternoon Senator Curry and fellow members of the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development. I am Representative Traci Gere, and I represent House District 134, which encompasses Kennebunkport and coastal Biddeford and Kennebunk. I am before you today to present LD 1385, which would align the Maine Department of Transportation's capital investments with our housing goals by considering a municipality's past actions and future plans toward meeting regional housing production goals when considering the award of discretionary grants.

Maine Department of Transportation grants play a significant role in planning, coordinating, and funding work in communities across the state. MaineDOT grant programs and policies address maintaining and constructing roads and bridges, assisting regional councils with regional transportation planning and coordination, and helping municipalities improve traffic safety, walkability, and access. A few examples are:

- The Maine Infrastructure Adaptation Fund provides “one-time funding to municipal, tribal, and infrastructure districts to adapt their critical infrastructure to reduce vulnerability to climate change.”
- The Village Partnership Initiative is designed for “mixed-use areas that serve the surrounding community(ies) with goods, services, and housing.”
- MaineDOT's Complete Streets policy, adopted in 2024, outlines how MaineDOT and its project partners will consider the needs of all types of users when planning and developing projects, with the goal of ensuring that Maine's transportation system is “safe for all people, and is intended to help create and maintain economically vibrant community environments.”

Throughout the state, these programs help fund the projects that improve the viability and livability of communities. While they do not fund housing directly, they are directly related to, and indeed necessary for, sustainably planning for, preserving, and creating housing. Without clearly linking transportation planning and projects to existing and future housing development, we risk putting state capital investment into projects that make it more difficult for housing to be built. By recognizing and valuing communities' efforts to build affordable and attainable housing, we can better align state investments for maximum impact. Transportation and housing policy are inextricably linked, and communities that are creating more housing should get a scoring bump in MaineDOT grant applications.

Earlier this session, we heard a report from DECD on the results of the working group that studied how to “Coordinate Collaboration Among State Agencies for the Purpose of Promoting Smart Growth and



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Development in High-use Corridors.” Going forward, we know that the Maine Office of Community Affairs will be working to better coordinate and streamline the application process for grants for municipalities in support of housing preservation and production. They are well-positioned to work with MaineDOT to develop and test grant criteria and metrics to put the intention of this bill into operation.

The HR&A report “A Roadmap for the Future of Housing,” recommended that we “Prioritize State funding for municipalities that contribute to statewide and regional housing production goals.” LD 1385 is one way to implement this recommendation.

LD 1385 would motivate progress on Maine’s housing goals by giving weight and recognition on MaineDOT grant applications to communities that are contributing to progress on our housing production goals.

Thank you for your consideration, and I ask for your support of LD 1385.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Traci Gere".

Traci Gere  
State Representative