

Testimony of Patrick Woodcock
Before the Joint Standing Committees on Housing and Economic Development
In Support of L.D. 1396
An Act to Amend Maine's Municipal Subdivision Standards to
Increase the Number of Dwelling Units on or Divisions of a Tract of
Land Before the Tract is Considered a Subdivision
April 24, 2025

Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and members of Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development, my name is Patrick Woodcock. I am here on behalf of the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, representing a network of 5,000+ small to large businesses. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on L.D. 1396, "An Act to Amend Maine's Municipal Subdivision Standards to Increase the Number of Dwelling Units on or Divisions of a Tract of Land Before the Tract is Considered a Subdivision." I want to thank Representative Roberts for bringing this legislation forward and working to unlock housing development.

The legislation would increase the threshold of state review of state subdivision law, removing the layer of state review, speeding up project development, and focusing limited Department of Environmental Protection's DEP resources on the more significant permit applications. This policy was recommended by more than 20 organizations to legislative leaders last week and is consistent with recommendation 1.5 from the HR&A presented to this Committee earlier this year.

Ultimately, the state should focus reviews on only the most significant projects and the standard under current state law has slowed permitting review times. It is time that the Legislature further prioritize DEP workload and eliminate state review for subdivision of lots only to those of five or more lots.

We have consistently heard from developers that state review is long, unpredictable, and adds costs to project development. DEP can only move as fast as the requirements under state law. This proposal before you would eliminate state review for projects of modest housing development and better utilize limited resources on those proposals that may have more statewide implications.

We encourage the Committee to support L.D. 1396.