

Good evening,

I am writing to you to ask that you do not pass LD 1534 through committee. As a landlord in Bangor and Old Town, as well as a 20 year Veteran of the Maine Air National Guard, I rely on fair housing laws to pay the bills and help survive in my upcoming retirement. I keep rents slightly below market value and keep my apartments in great condition, better than my own house, in fact. I understand the struggle as a tenant when a landlord is unfair or unresponsive, but these are not issues that can be dealt with using more laws which are already unfairly tipped in the tenants favor. I have also experienced what bad tenants can do to a property and how financially draining this can be.

To put a cap on rent or rent increases has proven to increase problems in other States and cities historically, we don't need these problems in Maine. They cause tenants to stay in housing even as their income increases, rather than moving into a higher end apartment, making room for lower income and younger tenants. This causes a clogged funnel, making it impossible for new tenants to find affordable housing. It also places undue stress upon landlords as housing prices, taxes, and utilities continue to rise, but rent prices stay the same or don't keep up with inflation. This often leads to foreclosure, decreasing availability of housing, and with a decrease in local landlords, it results in dilapidated properties (further driving affordability down). These facts are backed by research done in other rent controlled cities. I highly recommend visiting this site and paying close attention to what they have discovered

<https://www.rhawa.org/research-policy>

or look up RHAWA, rental housing association of Washington.

The following are more points for opposition of rent control laws:

- **Impact on Landlords and Housing Market:** Revoking state law on no-cause evictions and imposing rent controls disproportionately affect small landlords. Without the option to remove problematic tenants, they may be forced to retain those who create hostile or unsafe environments - putting respectful tenants at risk and exposing landlords, especially small property owners, to costly and prolonged legal battles - OR to exit the market entirely, worsening Maine's housing crisis.
- **Bureaucratic and Legal Burden:** Requiring annual reporting to both the Maine State Housing Authority and the Maine Office of Community Affairs, while allowing towns to adopt their own eviction proceedings, adds unnecessary red tape and legal confusion. This places an undue burden on small landlords, pushing many to leave the rental market, and creates chaos for courts, lawyers, and tenants accustomed to consistent state eviction laws.
- **Disincentivizing Development and Reducing Property Values:** These laws discourage new housing development, which Maine desperately needs, and reduces property values. In rent-controlled Portland, multi-unit property values have significantly declined as a direct result of rent stabilization.
- **Market Stabilization and Reduced Mobility:** Maine's rental market has already stabilized organically, with many landlords reporting longer vacancy periods and reducing rents to stay competitive. However, rent stabilization discourages tenant

turnover, limiting housing availability and making it harder for newcomers - especially young families and Maine's workforce-to find a place to live.

- **Financial Impact and Tax Burden Shift:** Rent stabilization lowers property values, reducing property tax revenue and shifting the burden to single-family homeowners, including the elderly and struggling families. It also disproportionately harms small landlords, who often lack the financial cushion to absorb mandated rent caps and rising costs.

Thank you

Nick Moulton