



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and esteemed members of the Housing and Economic Development Committee, I am Representative Mike Soboleski and I am here to present my bill LD 1662, *"An Act to Amend the Laws Regarding Zoning and Land Use Restrictions to Limit Certain Requirements to Municipalities with Populations of More than 10,000"*

The State of Maine is home to a diverse range of municipalities, each with distinct characteristics, infrastructure capabilities, and planning priorities. This legislation recognizes that smaller rural communities face unique challenges in sustaining zoning requirements that may be more suited to larger municipalities.

By specifying that certain zoning mandates passed into law by LD 2003, April 27, 2022, apply only to municipalities with populations exceeding 10,000, this bill ensures that smaller towns retain local control over development decisions, safeguarding their ability to manage land use in a manner consistent with their available resources and long-standing community values. Many of Maine's rural communities have a deeply rooted sense of identity, shaped by generations of residents committed to preserving the character and integrity of their towns. The imposition of broad zoning regulations on these municipalities without consideration for their scale, infrastructure, and local governance structure could undermine their ability to plan for growth in a sustainable and appropriate manner.

This legislation strikes a necessary balance between promoting responsible development in more populous municipalities and allowing rural communities the flexibility to maintain zoning practices that align with their unique circumstances. It ensures that small towns are not subjected to policies that may be operationally impractical or disruptive to their way of life.

For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, which respects the autonomy of Maine's smaller municipalities while ensuring a practical approach to housing and development policy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael A. Soboleski".

Michael A. Soboleski
State Representative