



Broken Bridge Tenant Union

by and for residents of
Bay Bridge Estates in Brunswick, Maine

Senator Curry, Representative Gere and members of the housing committee:

With 466 occupied lots, Bay Bridge Estates (Brunswick) is the largest manufactured home community in Maine. The Broken Bridge Tenant Union was established in 2024 by residents and our numbers currently include 238 households. Enclosed are some letters of testimony in support of LD 1723 that our members asked me to share with you today.

Thank you,

L Marieke Giasson,

Tenant organizer

Almira Kenney, Primrose Ln

As of December 1, 2024, my husband was still alive after surviving 2 years and 8 months with colon cancer. He was 60 years old. He had been getting disability from Social security and long term disability from his job. At the time, I was 67 years old, receiving my Social security benefits, working part time at the same job for 10 years. My husband passed away on December 11th, very sadly. January 1, 2025, lot rent went up from \$535. to \$600. Our, actually my household income went down by almost \$2,000. Social security gave me \$101. a month to make up the difference between his and mine. Besides being distraught from losing my sweet husband of 9 years, I am sad that myself and a lot of others here in the park are basically one step away from being homeless.

Amanda Kimball Lenz, Tufton St

Hello- I moved my home into Bay Bridge in the summer of 2021 after a lot of careful consideration. I liked the community feel and at that time the lot rent was reasonable \$425 a month plus my mortgage it was sustainable to live here on my one income. I'm a registered Nurse in the area, we make decent money but long term and going up on the lot rent by \$200 a month since my first year here is scary. I bought a mobile home as an affordable option to be able to stay in the state of Maine and not be house poor. If lot rent continues to climb with no relief I will be forced to move out of the park. For the very little amenities that we have here and although I like my neighbors and the location it will not be sustainable the closer I get to retirement. Furthermore the housing crisis and cost of living in Maine in general is so high that at this point I am researching areas that already have rent stabilization in effect and unfortunately it looks like that will be out of the state of Maine... Maine this is not the way life is suppose to be with so many struggling for basic needs such as shelter, food, high heating costs. I have told my three young adult children (all college educated with good careers) to leave Maine they would make more money and the cost of living would be less. Maine officials wonder why Maine is an "old state" meaning more older adults than younger adults... It is really obvious that the cost to live in Maine and at BBE is too high.

Anna Baird, Theodore Dr

I'm chronically ill, disabled and living with my caregiver. The rent hikes have made it so difficult to live here with all the other high expenses. I own my home but can't afford to move it and can only rent this spot. I'm working to get breaks but they keep getting cut off as time goes by and expenses rise.

Autumn Schaedler, Bay Bridge Rd

We moved into our trailer to get away from high rent costs and to have space for three adults. We've barely been able to scrape by with one income. We have different health issues that have made it hard to find work for each of us. The continued rent increases have put a ton of extra burden on our single earner. And the stress has not helped anyones health. We're still waiting on a solution to the old water pipes and supply issue. The last thing we need is to be without water because the weather's bad. There never seems to be

anyone in the office to see or call when we have concerns. It would be nice not to get a price increase letter in the mail every few months.

Barbara Rollins, Franklin Pkwy

I am a senior and live alone and on a fixed income. I am really struggling to make ends meet! I am well over 50% of my income just for lot rent and general necessities to keep the home on its lot. Then you add oil, car expenses, like registration and tires, gasoline, oil changes, groceries, EGGS, bottled water and pet costs for one small companion.

Another rent increase will make me a homeless person with my little dog. I can't even afford to buy bird seed to enjoy the birds! There is no more eating out, going to the movies, no dancing, no fun anymore! I cannot trim any more. Insurance is my next cut. Meanwhile we are paying taxes on land we don't even own. They are out of control and something needs to be done. I would think with this being the largest trailer park in the state, that someone somehow could manage our rent increase, improve our roads and give us drinkable water. They are robbing their tenants and some of us people that are well behaved and are never late on the rent are soon to be homeless! Seriously 😞

Bev and Dean Blair, Candy Ln

We moved here almost 13 years ago. At that time we had only one income and living in a mobile home was affordable. Since then, our financial situation has greatly improved, however if the rent keeps increasing, we will start struggling again. The rent increases every year, but the services have declined, such as not repairing the potholes, tree trimming, snow plowing, sewer repairs and water infrastructure, and more recently with no proper management. We are definitely not getting what we're paying for!

The Bull Family, Larry Ln

We moved into the park in hopes to start a family. When we started it was around 300\$ for rent now it's 600\$.

When they sold the park we were promised that rent would not climb more than 100\$. We were promised better roads, a children's park and clubhouse along with a dog park. They promised that they would work on the water lines and that they would look at all the dangerous trees.

But instead we have higher rent, We are now struggling to get by. My wife has had to go back to work and put aside a lot of our plans. We live paycheck to paycheck now.

Carol Brust, Beverly Dr

I paved my own driveway out of pocket because it was broken up, then their water line broke under the driveway and they never repaired it to the original condition. Pot holes all over. The continued rent increase

will be forced to look elsewhere for housing, they collect well over a quarter million dollars a month here but the roads are horrible and we can never get a hold of anyone in the office. Big corporation [Legacy Communities] in Miami has no regards for the tenants in Bay Bridge.

Catherine Theriault, Larry Ln

I drive an old car and worry if or when it breaks down, how would I pay the bill. I also have diabetes and have to eat lots of vegetables, fruit, etc which is very expensive with prices these days. I can't afford the rent to keep going up.

Chad Hammer, Franklin Pkwy

I bought this mobile home last year as I just moved to Maine and am a single income household, and could not afford rent in the area or the purchase of a traditional house. I was also excited for the dog park and pickle ball court that the park had said they were planning to put in. During the process of the showing, I was told that I could move the trailer if I wanted to, as it had all of its gear. The day I signed the contract I was told that I had to sign something that said I COULDN'T MOVE IT. I also found out shortly after I moved in, that they were not going to be installing the amenities posted on their website, and my rent has also increased 2 times this last year.

Christina James, Franklin Pkwy

As a single woman that is the sole provider it is hard enough to manage household bills by yourself. When I moved in 3 1/2 years ago my rent was 410\$ now it's up to 600\$. Now it would be one thing if they raised the rent and actually managed the park and made necessary repairs to roads and general park upkeep. It may be a little easier to accept the increases. Unfortunately this park is rundown with streets that have potholes big enough to block road access and majorly damage your car.

Cindy H, Larry Lane

My husband and I are retired but now work part time to supplement our income. We moved into Bay Bridge 11 years ago with a new home. We sold in 2021 to travel but due to a health issue we were unable to and bought a used home in the park to begin treatments needed. When we did, naturally the lot rent increased and within an 8 month period they tried to increase my rent twice. With the continued rent increases as high as they keep going we will never be able to fully retire and afford to live here! To sell a home in this park in order to get out is harder now since lot rent at this time is \$800 a month and our so-called, advertised "amenities" have yet to materialize. Contact with the owner, for me, has been nil. I have turned over paperwork to Lorrie, Rep. Cheryl Golek and a couple AG's. I have given permission for their use.

Cody Pagliaroli, Williams Circle

We moved to the park 1 1/2 yrs ago because our previous house was big and old and we couldn't afford it anymore. Myself, my wife and 3 daughters moved here because it was going to be doable on a strict budget. My wife and I both work and if the rent keeps going up we won't be able to afford it! This is supposed to be an affordable option for families and with the increasing rent cost it will make it impossible. It's not fair for us to keep having these big increases in rent and taxes for a tiny piece of property that we don't even own. We take care of our house and property and we need to have an affordable and safe place to raise our family. Please consider our pleas and stop them from making families homeless in an already broken economy!

David Tardiff, Theodore Dr

Been in this park for 41 years and have seen modest rent increases over the years but nothing like what's happened over the past 3 years. I need repairs done on my home, new roof and ceiling repairs but having these steep rent increases, I can't afford them.

Ellen Gallant, Franklin Pkwy

I am a recent widow. I am 70 years old and have to supplement my income with a part time job. I am on my feet on a cement floor all day. I have back issues and menieres disease which causes severe vertigo.

My home is 43 years old. It is not on a cement pad which caused the house to shift and needs a lot of repairs. I also need new appliances and an overhaul on the master bedroom/ bathroom. I had to buy a car which is an expense that is difficult to pay for. Right now I am getting by with some help from my children, but if rent keeps going up. I will not be able to afford to live here. I cannot afford an apartment or senior living home. I am extremely afraid of what's ahead. I feel that raising our rent continually is robbery.

I love my home. I have great neighbors. I like living close to town. I do not want to lose the life I have here.

Jennifer Daigle, Candy Ln

My partner and I bought one of the brand new homes in Bay Bridge in January 2024. We were thrilled by what Bay Bridge marketed as upcoming amenities and how this is the opportunity for us to buy a home. They originally told us our home would be ready mid-September 2023 and kept pushing the date back without telling us. In October 2023, the lease on our apartment ended and we had to start paying double our rent to stay in our apartment while waiting for our home to be ready, \$2000/mth for each of the 4 month's delay. Their promise of our home being available in September cost us an extra \$4000 to keep a roof over our head in the meantime. At one point, Bay Bridge management sent me an email saying that the promised lot rent that we signed a contract on was actually going to be \$50 higher. -- We moved to Bay Bridge excited about having a roof over our head that we can call ours at a cost that we can afford. Now that we've been here a year, our lot rent has gone up \$80 (13.7% increase). In another year, if they bring our rent up at the same rate, we will be paying \$750 for the small lot my home sits on and for the empty promises of a clubhouse, dog park, maintained roads, etc. If one of us were to get sick, I'm not sure how long we can afford to live here, and moving elsewhere is out of the question, as it costs at least \$3000 to get into an

apartment nowadays. Bay Bridge has us stuck right where they want us and if left unchecked, it is starting to feel like they are going to get everything they can out of us until we have nothing left.

Josh DuPaul, Franklin Pkwy

I've been at Baybridge when the water felt nice to bathe in & now it burns my skin! You can just smell the chemicals whenever you turn on the hot water, my body knows it does not want to walk into this horrible cleanse as my skin hurts for days, my shoulders, arms, hands & lower back burns as it's so dry after a 20 min bathe. I apply a full body palm lotion just after the shower so I may be a little bit better after.

For those who are not feeling this come down to the park & feel our pain. Smell that water & feel the dry horror that we need to bathe with, then guess what our RENT GOES UP!! For what!?!? They don't fix anything, there is no one here that cares about these 400 plus homes in this park which is basically a small town... We all care for each other & can apply proper health for one another as us residents aka us neighbors care for each other! I've known a majority of all my surrounding neighbors for years. We have a close bond together, and if we ever need anything from any of us, we all help each other out. I've seen a tree fall through my neighbor's house and I ran over to make sure that she was OK and then we called the fire department and they came over to help. There are so many many things that I can't describe of all the things that my neighbors and myself have done for each other, but it's sad to see at the park just start to just wither away. Legacy is not helping us, they are just raising the rent & to make a dime but if we can have us all come together like a town with our council I know all of us will participate with helping with the production to bring this park into the healthy realm it's been seeking for.

Karlene S, Larry Lane

I moved to what was called Crookers Trailer Park, 39 years ago. It was more affordable, taxes were lower and so on. I sold my home and moved in here because of that. I have seen the increases over the years but they were minimal and affordable. I retired and knew with the small raises Social Security gave me and the rent increases, I would still be alright. Legacy bought the Park, has raised the rent unbelievably, to the point I am now paying way over 50% of my income. I am barely making it and it scares me because if I can't afford to live here, where do I go? I am 80 years old, do I live on the street, another raise like the last one or if it is higher, what do I do? I can barely pay my other bills, and like I said, if they go up again, where do I go? I shouldn't have to live in fear of how to pay my rent, how to buy groceries, pay my lights, etc at my age.

Ken Wagner, Tufton St

My wife and I are on fixed Income we moved to Bay Bridge 7 years ago after I was put on Disability. Since then the Park rent has gone up over 300 dollars + I am now worried about What is to come of my wife if I pass. We had a mobile home in Florida and the same type of organization took over, promising us Club houses, dog parks, stable lot rent. Instead all we have gotten is poor service, lack of protection, and rent increases that are off the wall. The town of Brunswick and the State of Maine have done nothing to protect us from tyrants like those out of state crooks that have taken over the park as they have many others all around the country. The only way to stop this would be to have our town and state step in and stop them. I see young families struggling every day here in the park. Soon they will be knocking on the homeless shelter doors or asking for money from the town to help get by because they can't afford their homes anymore. We

have tree limbs dropping on our homes and I have asked them to do something about it in a letter. No response from the park. Potholes throughout the park not being fixed, and BIG ONE Water pressure low! I can go on and on. Snow plowing is the worst I have ever seen. Yet they continue to raise the lot rent.

All we want is an affordable safe place to live. Is that too much to ask for?

Linda H, Theodore Dr

I am 78 years old and still work full time because I make very little Social Security. Full-time at my job entails about 45 hours a week. It is very physical and I have just lost 6 weeks because of a compression fracture in my back. My short-term disability only pays 60% of my weekly pay and that is running out this week so I have to go back to work next week ready or not. I also have chronic lyme disease as well.

My most fervent wish is that I reduce my hours to four days a week instead of five. But whenever I get close to this ideal, the rent goes WAY up again. And there you go.

Meantime, I am just trying to keep the faith. I realize that people like Venture capitalists always get theirs in the end. But it would be even better if they saw the light and changed their evil ways before that happened.

Linda B, Tufton St

My husband and I are both retired and right now we both have a pension to live on. However my husband is 86 and in poor health. If he passes away I will no longer have his income. If that happens, I fear that I will have a great difficulty being able to afford the kind of rent hikes the park owners have been doing every year. Since we moved into Bay Bridge Estates in 2010 our rent has gone from \$295. a month to now \$600. Just in the last two years it has been raised by \$100. Please the situation of us seniors who have no way of increasing our income to compensate for these continuing rent hikes.

Linda D, Theodore Dr

I live on fixed income and moved here 19 years ago with my husband who passed away 9 years ago. Back then it was a decent place to live and very affordable. I don't know how people do it now with the cost of mortgage and lot rent. Thank god my home is paid for! But with the cost of fuel, meds, food and other expenses, I don't have much for anything else. We're supposed to keep our lots in perfect condition but there are so many places that look disgusting. Where are all the things that they said they were going to do for us? (Playground, community building.....). I can't afford to live somewhere else and the wait list for housing is years long!!!

Linda Dumont, 22 Theodore Dr

I bought my home for 16,000, 20 years ago. I lived in Paris, France for 20 years and have no 401k built up. So I wanted to keep my bills to income ratio completely affordable. I was trying to set myself up for

retirement and make it doable for myself seeing that I was only going to have 20 years of accumulated Social Security to live on after I retired. From 2005 to 2020 the rent went up pretty much 100 dollars. Only 5 or 10 a year. I thought this was fair. And everything was affordable on what I made and felt like I had made a good decision. I felt safe and even though I didn't have much, it was enough to live on without always worrying. Then Legacy bought this park and in that short time our rent went from 335 to 600. CMP went up, K1 went up...I used to get help for my fuel and that is no longer possible. I'm working as a receptionist and there is no way I'm going to get a raise any time soon. On my fixed income I won't be able to pay 800 a month. My home is 38 years old and can't be moved. Where am I going to go when I get kicked out of Baybridge because I can't pay the rent anymore? I am not on disability, but I have 3 diseases caused by the cancer drug I had to take for a year. I can't work anymore than I already do. I can barely keep up with my 40 hours a week job I have now. We need protection from greedy companies buying up our parks to use as cash cows at the expense of our fragile lives. Thank you.

Lindsey H, Tufton St.

I am a single mother of two kids. I work a 40 hour week + and struggle to afford all that's needed to live. My youngest child has medical issues and it seems I live in the hospital more than my home. I'm still faced with all the bills, maintenance and responsibility of being a mom, employee and a resident here at Bay Bridge Estates. Rates keep going higher, quality within the park gets worse and we as residents are expected to do way more than what the owners could even imagine doing. They can't even keep someone in the office for our residents. The water has been an issue here probably longer than I've been alive and nothing's changed. My water is so terrible I feel unclean after a shower in my own home. Definitely not drinkable. The road conditions are terrible in the winter. The one amenity we have is the [Town of Brunswick] little boat launch area that has been out of commission most of the time due to homelessness and drug users. The crime rate around here is getting worse. We need more. We need change. We as residents deserve a whole lot more than what we are receiving for the price we're paying.

Melissa Gallison, Tufton St

I have lived in Baybridge for nineteen years and never imagined how difficult it would be to make ends meet living in a mobile home park where there's no fair rental rates based off a residents income. I currently live alone, am paying 50 percent of my income to live here and have now taken on three jobs to cover these ambiguous rent increases. I'm a full time employee and I can only imagine that these increases in lot rent every year will displace many residents in Baybridge, that is my fear. The water in our park is undrinkable and not safe for human consumption although they'll report it's fine. If the water was safe there'd be no debris, sludge, rocks or other particles coming through our water lines, destroying our water heaters and causing health problems.

I also do not see that the money paid in goes towards park improvement or for park services as we have seen a decline in what's offered over the last decade. I have also had difficulty getting in contact with park management. They do not respond, return calls or answer emails when there's a concern. I feel that a lot of illegal actions occur through Legacy management and they've tried to collect extra for taxes without going through the proper steps. If there were any investigations in their accounting of payments, there would be many areas of questionable concerns on how they operate their resident portal. I myself can show how they have no actual fact-based basis for calculating ad valorem taxes. Each year they'll come up with some

random figure to collect from residents and then they reimburse some odd amounts back. This suggests they're not operating off of factual tax figures. As they're allowed to continue to operate with no accountability or oversight it is my feeling that many of us, including me, will be homeless if the rent increases continue in the manner allowed.

MK Good, Tuffon St

My husband is a retired teacher and I am also retired. We manage by being cautious with his pension and my social security. I am the caretaker for both of us. He has Alzheimer's and I have a paralyzed vocal cord, so working for extra money is quite difficult since I am always struggling for air. Being able to live in a safe community where we can afford our rent, heat, electric and utilities, plus doctors, medicine & food is critical to our well being. We do not go to restaurants, movies, nor do we go on vacations. We live frugally. We thought we would be stable in this community for a long time. Our combined incomes place us only a small percentage above the guidelines for "Heap and Snap" assistance at present. When something happens to my husband, then my social security will be my entire income and I will have to apply for Mainecare, Heap, Snap and low income senior housing. I will then be in the position where living here with only rent, electric and perhaps some money for heat, will be 100% of my income. I will have to have additional support to survive in my home. I will obviously be forced out of our home and in the untenable situation of being homeless until housing can be found.

Olivia Ruede-Nappe, Candy Ln

My husband and I purchased our home early in 2023 as rents were starting to go up. We needed another bedroom for our granddaughter we were fostering to be able to stay with us. This was the only affordable option we had at the time. My husband has since passed away and I'm having health issues and needed to have my leg amputated late in 2024. The rent increased the first year before the year was up, about 8 months in. It went up \$30 from \$585 to \$615. Now this year it went up to \$665. I'm living on one income of long term disability from being out of work. I'm already struggling to make ends meet and once back to work will need to get a second job. On top of the mortgage, if the rent keeps going up this way, I won't be able to live here much longer. The septic system's root bound and there is a new spot mapped out with flags that have been placed in the yard for close to a year now with nothing being done. Legacy isn't keeping up their end of repairs to the lots, but they keep on jacking up the rent with false promises of a dog park and pickle ball courts. When will the lies stop?

Olivia - Candy Ln

Patricia Brown & Larry Brown, 53 Franklin Parkway

I am writing hoping you can help people, especially seniors, who reside in Bay Bridge Estates Mobile Home park in Brunswick and other parks in Maine.

This park was sold to Legacy Communities in 2021 and our lot rent went up as soon as they did. We were paying \$410 a month and they raised it to \$435 for year 2022. The following year it jumped to \$475 and

\$535 the next. By January 2025 it was up to \$600.00. Anyone new moving into the park starts out at \$800 lot rent so you see where this is all going.

There are over 400 homes in this park and a lot of us are seniors living on a fixed income. It seems like Legacy is trying to drive us out of our homes onto the street. They want to get the rents up to what people are paying for apartments in our area. People in here have to take care of all repairs such as water heaters, roofs and the like whereas in an apartment, those are covered by the landlord. Plus a lot of landlords also include snow removal and lawn care. We get nothing! When the power goes out in winter there is no water to even flush the toilets. One would think they would care enough for us residents to have generators in the pump house, but they only think of the money they can get from people, not caring what hardships they are putting on all of us.

When Legacy took over they repaved or spray-sealed some streets, but upped the rent to cover costs. The streets being paved was a joke as they are falling apart now. Then they opened up existing empty lots and put new mobile homes on them to sell for profit and again made residents pay for their upgrade. They continue to do this at our expense. When the property tax for the park went up they made us all pay a one time fee on our lots to make up the difference and I imagine we will get that again for upcoming tax season.

We have been in this Park for almost 36 years and it just gets worse. It is so unfair to people who have bought their homes hoping to reside in them for a long time. These big companies come in and think they can get rich off of these parks, and take full advantage of the people, especially seniors. There is not enough senior housing available for all of us to go if we needed to, and they know that so to them we are sitting ducks.

This really hurts our community and I am hoping in some way you can address this and offer help and stop these companies from ruining Maine communities and abusing people. Please find a way to help us all stay in our homes, and stop their greed! Putting forward a law to limit how much they can increase our lot rent would certainly help.

Patty Aube, Valerie Ave

I live in Baybridge Estates with my husband. My daughter and her husband and 4 children also live with us. We had hopes that Brunswick would build more friendly 4 or more bedroom apartments for growing families but that has not happened. At this time we are still struggling with the high cost of the lot increases we have had since Legacy took over. Including the rising cost of taxes, food oil, electricity we are just making it.

Shirley W, Franklin Pkwy

I have lived in BBE since 2006! The lot rent has risen more in the last 4 years than the 1st 15 years I was here! There has been no increase in services! Legacy promised a lot of improvements when they took over, none of which have happened! The park advertises these amenities none of which we actually have! The roads are not kept up and there are multiple huge pot holes that are not filled! They just get bigger! There is a huge drainage problem every time we have heavy rain! I have lost time from work because it wasn't safe to drive my car through the flooded streets on multiple occasions! It is getting harder & harder to make ends meet! I am nearing retirement age and don't see any way to retire with the extremely large lot rent increases! In addition to lot rent increases, Legacy bills us every year and expects us to pay a portion

of their property taxes! This is not property we own! We pay a monthly lot rent in addition to property taxes on our homes!

Sonia Robitaille, Theodore Dr.

I've lived in the park for 18 years. Been retired for 10 years. These high increases in rent every year will most likely make me look for new lodging. Being retired I don't get much of a cost of living raise. I'm almost 76 and not likely to go back to work. And what do we get for our money? The roads are full of potholes, they refuse to cut more trees that are in danger of falling especially during a high wind storm or ice storm that occurred Dec, 2023. My roof sustained damage during that storm thankfully not too serious. And another issue is the office being closed most of the time. It is becoming a very sad situation.

Stephanie Conant, Theodore Dr

I'm a single mom of 3 kids recently divorced but have been separated for over 2 years now. He pays little in child support because he is disabled so I have the brunt of raising 3 kids alone. I have to get help with heat twice a winter and family helps too. The rent increase hurts all of us on fixed incomes and will eventually put us all out on the streets. What will we do then? It's bad enough that we have to live in fear of our lives with these trees falling through our homes (yes I had one fall through my home) and these promises made to remove the trees from around my home that never happened, to now have to worry that soon we could be homeless from rising rent costs! When will it ever end?

T. Sullivan, Beverly Dr.

My husband and I are in our late 60's and every day we suffer from anxiety because of the financial stress. Will we be able to afford to live in BayBridge Estates if the rent gouging continues here ? We were paying \$535. when we moved in here at the end of 2021, now several increases later we pay \$665 . None of the amenities they claim are here (still advertised) are non-existent. I go to the Food pantry several times a month and have a box of food delivered every other week because after paying our bills there is nowhere near enough to get eggs,milk,bread,butter etc. The unknown future is very scary to seniors especially with the threat of homelessness hanging over our heads.

Traci Moeller, Tufton St.

I moved to Bay Bridge 36 years ago this year. For more than 30 of those years it was affordable and he only raised the rent out of necessity. Since Legacy bought us out the rent has been raised as often as they can and we've received NOTHING for the added funds, in fact, they have cut back services. I am already struggling, living on just over \$900 a month, rent being \$600 of that, trying to pay the copays on my dialysis etc so that every month I'm literally juggling bills and am always behind on something as I cannot afford all of my bills. I will be homeless soon if something doesn't give.