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*Testimony of Rep. Rafael Macias in support of*  
**LD 1723, An Act to Amend the Laws Governing Manufactured Housing  
Communities to Prevent Excessive Rent and Fees Increases**  
*Before the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development*

Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development. My name is Rafael Macias, and I represent House District 51, which includes part of Topsham. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of **LD 1723, An Act to Amend the Laws Governing Manufactured Housing Communities to Prevent Excessive Rent and Fees Increases**.

Maine's history runs deep in Bay Bridge Estates, a neighborhood in Brunswick on the banks of the Merrymeeting Bay. One of the original 16th-century settlers, named Thomas Purchase, once operated a trading post here. The land offered a shortcut to the ocean, a place known to the native people as a carrying place, bypassing the longer Kennebec River route with their canoes on their backs. He settled there for the proximity to the reliable traffic, purchasing his wares for his and his benefactors' profit.

Today, that land is a manufactured home community surrounded by tall pines swaying to Maine's quiet, peaceful rhythm. I've canvassed that neighborhood many times. I've spoken with retired teachers, nurses, and many other folks on fixed incomes, with people who've lived there for decades, fully expecting to live here for the rest of their lives.

They all say the same thing: *We're worried*. Worried about anonymous investment firms buying up the land beneath their homes. Worried about rent hikes. And worried that their stability — their sense of place — could vanish with a signature they never saw coming.

What's happening isn't unique to Bay Bridge Estates. It's part of a national strategy by private equity firms. They buy up mobile home parks quietly. Raise rents sharply. Layer on fees. And extract wealth from residents who can't afford to move their homes and can't afford not to pay.

It's a game plan — and it's horribly effective. A neighborhood becomes a spreadsheet line item. All the neighbors become revenue sources, and Maine becomes a faceless serfdom.

It returns Maine to a structure where landowners dictate the terms, and those who live on the land have no say. It looks a lot like feudalism.

LD 1723 is a simple measure — it caps rent increases, expands the Housing Board to include the people most affected, and affirms that Maine won't let absentee landlords treat our communities like ATMs.

As today's manufactured housing communities quickly become owned by Real Estate Investment Trusts and their nameless, faceless investors, the only thing you can trust is the lord's extraction of wealth on the backs of their serfs.

Let's change that.

Let's pass LD 1723 and stand up for the people who make up these communities. We, as Maine's government, can say no to these leeches bleeding our neighborhoods dry.

Let's do that.

Thank you.