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Testimony of Rep. Cassie Julia introducing

LD 1765, An Act to Ensure Affordability and Stability in Housing for Mobile Home Park Residents

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development

Good afternoon Senator Curry, Representative Gere and esteemed members of the Housing and Economic Development Committee. My name is Cassie Julia, and I represent House District 65, which is part of Waterville. I'm here today to introduce **LD 1765, An Act to Ensure Affordability and Stability in Housing for Mobile Home Park Residents**.

I've served on the Waterville Planning Board for about three years. My very first meeting involved complaints about the new corporate owners of one of our city's manufactured home communities. That was the beginning of my education about the conditions of many of these communities across Maine, and the unique challenges that come with owning your home but not the land beneath it. I've worked closely with residents of manufactured home communities ever since.

This bill offers a local-first solution to a growing crisis. Across Maine, we are hearing from residents – many of them seniors, retirees and working families – who are being priced out of their homes due to steep, sudden increases in lot rent. In many cases, these communities have been bought by out-of-state investment firms, and long-time residents are now treated as revenue streams rather than neighbors.

The reality is this: when you own your home but not the land it sits on, you are uniquely vulnerable. Moving a manufactured home is often financially and logistically impossible. So when lot rent jumps by 20, 30, or even 50 percent, the result isn't just financial strain – it's displacement.

LD 1765 doesn't impose a rent cap or mandate statewide limits. Instead, it takes a common-sense approach. When lot rent in a manufactured home community increases by more than 5% in a

single year, this bill triggers a local review process. That process begins with the municipality – giving towns and cities the first opportunity to hear from residents, assess the situation and work with community owners toward a solution. If the municipality doesn't have the capacity or chooses not to take it on, they can refer the matter to the Manufactured Housing Board.

This framework is flexible, fair and respectful of both resident and owner concerns. Most importantly, it gives people in manufactured home communities somewhere to turn – and gives local governments the authority to act before rent hikes lead to widespread displacement.

LD 1765 is about giving Maine communities the tools they need to protect long-time residents from being pushed out of their homes. It supports fairness, housing stability and local decision-making.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.