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DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION



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**TESTIMONY OF**  
**MARK STEBBINS, FIELD SERVICES DIRECTOR, BUREAU OF LAND RESOURCES**  
**MAINE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

**SPEAKING NEITHER FOR NOR AGAINST TO L.D. 1926**

**AN ACT TO REQUIRE INCREASED HOUSING DENSITY OR LOWER MINIMUM LOT  
SIZES FOR WORKFORCE HOUSING**

**PRESENTED BY REP. STOVER**

**BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE  
ON  
HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**DATE OF HEARING:**

**MAY 9, 2025**

Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and members of the Committee on Housing and Economic Development, my name is Mark Stebbins, and I am the Field Services Director for the Bureau of Land Resources at the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). I am speaking neither for nor against to L.D. 1926.

The DEP is concerned about Section 5 of the bill. Section 5 conflicts with dimensional requirements in the shoreland zone, which will weaken the shoreline and water quality protections afforded by the Mandatory Shoreland Zoning Act. Section 5 of the bill specifically states " a workforce housing development must comply with municipal

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L.D. 1926: An Act to Require Increased Housing Density or Lower Minimum Lot Sizes for Workforce Housing

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Public Hearing: May 9

Page 2 of 2

ordinances for setbacks, height limitations and other requirements that are not unreasonably restrictive of implementing the intent of this section, including shoreland zoning..." It appears that this provision proposed by LD 1926 may supersede any shoreland zoning requirements. The Mandatory Shoreland Zoning Act requires municipalities to adopt ordinances that are no less restrictive than DEP's minimum guidelines. LD 1926 proposes to allow municipalities to set standards that are less restrictive than DEP's minimum guidelines. While shoreland zoning ordinances are administered by municipalities, DEP's role is to oversee the implementation of the Act to ensure ordinances are properly administered and enforced and that the purposes of the Act are upheld.

The likely result of this change is that more shorefront property owners will have less stringent dimensional requirements in the shoreland zone, leading to changes to the character of the shoreland zone that are inconsistent with the purposes of the Shoreland Zoning Act.

The Department encourages the Committee to hold true to maintain the shoreland zoning requirements for affordable housing developments.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I would be happy to answer any questions from the Committee, both now and at the work session.