



Solutions for a
Toxic-Free Tomorrow

Testimony of Sarah Woodbury, Vice President of Policy and Advocacy, Defend Our Health
In SUPPORT of LD 1927, "An Act to Protect Housing Quality by Enacting Mold Inspection,
Notification and Remediation Requirements"
Before the Judiciary Committee
May 12, 2025

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Sarah Woodbury. I am the vice president of policy and advocacy for Defend Our Health. Defend Our Health's mission is to make sure that everyone has equal access to safe food and drinking water, healthy homes and products that are toxic-free and climate friendly. I am here to testify in support of LD 1927, "An Act to Protect Housing Quality by Enacting Mold Inspection, Notification and Remediation Requirements."

Maine has some of the oldest housing stock in the nation. Older homes are more susceptible to mold due to more exposure to the elements and aging building materials. Mold are allergens that can cause allergic reactions such as sneezing, runny nose, or skin rashes. For people with asthma, exposure to mold can cause asthma attacks, which can be serious, particularly in children¹. LD 1927 will help protect renters from exposure to mold by giving them clear guidance on how to work with their landlords to address any mold in their dwellings.

A little over a year ago, I got a call from my younger sister. At the time, she was about 7 months pregnant. She and her partner were renting a property in Windham, and they found mold in their apartment. She called me as she wasn't sure what they were supposed to do. I told her to call her landlord. She did. When she didn't hear back from him in a couple of days, she called me again to see what they should do. I did some research and found out that she had no real recourse around this issue. Thankfully, her landlord did finally get back to her but by the time that happened, and they got around to remediating it, it was about a month. A month of living in a rental unit inhaling mold while 7 months pregnant. That's unacceptable. And if he hadn't gotten back to her, there would have been very little she could do. She wasn't in a financial situation where she could easily move or stay someplace else while it was fixed. LD 1927 would help others in similar situations understand both their responsibility as tenants to provide prompt notification to their landlord of any issues, and as landlords to swiftly deal with the issue to protect the health of their tenants. We urge the committee to vote "ought to pass" on LD 1927.

¹ Environmental Protection Agency. (2024, October 14). *Can mold cause health problems?*. EPA.
<https://www.epa.gov/mold/can-mold-cause-health-problems>