

Pinette, Susan

From: Jonathan Shute <jshute6720@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 8:20 AM
To: Cmte JUD
Cc: Linda
Subject: Please oppose LD 1927

This message originates from outside the Maine Legislature.

Judiciary Committee:

My name is Jonathan Shute I have owned a four unit building on Stevens Avenue in Portland for over 40 years. I am opposed to LD 1927 precisely for the reasons put forth by the Rental Housing Alliance of Southern Maine.

Also, at our attorney's suggestion nearly 40 years ago or when it became available, we have used the Attorney Generals lease on our property. The few times we have had issues with tenants requiring court appearances it has been very helpful to have the AG lease as law enforcement and the courts are familiar with it. I reject AG Frey's reasoning for not supporting an AG revision of the lease.

Thank you.

Jonathan Shute
Linda Shute
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Rental Housing Alliance of Southern Maine

- **Good landlords already act quickly** - mandates are unnecessary. Responsible housing providers know that leaks and moisture damage property. Most landlords are already motivated to address these issues fast. This bill adds rigid timelines that ignore the realities of scheduling, staffing, and vendor availability.

- **A 24-hour inspection mandate is unrealistic** - For small landlords, especially in rural areas, inspecting within 24 hours of every reported issue is often logistically impossible, especially on weekends, holidays, or when contractors are unavailable.
- **Five-day remediation is not always feasible** - Moisture and mold remediation often depends on drying times, contractor availability, material access, and weather conditions. Imposing a hard 5-day deadline is arbitrary and sets landlords up to fail even when they're acting in good faith.
- **No definition of "leak event" or "visible mold" invites abuse** - Without clear definitions, tenants could trigger inspections over minor condensation or harmless mildew. This creates unnecessary liability and opens the door to complaints based on normal conditions in Maine's older housing stock.
- **Tenants share responsibility for mold prevention** - This bill does not adequately acknowledge the tenant's role in maintaining a healthy living environment, like using ventilation, reporting leaks early, and avoiding excess humidity. Mold is often caused by tenant behavior, not landlord neglect.
- **Not all mold is dangerous** - Most surface mold is cosmetic and non-toxic. Mandating expensive remediation for every instance, even harmless or minor mold, drives up costs needlessly.
- **Cost-prohibitive for small landlords** - Mandatory mold inspections and remediation could force small landlords out of the market, shrinking available housing and worsening the housing crisis.
- **Creates a "gotcha" system ripe for abuse** - where minor mold is weaponized to withhold rent or delay evictions.
- **Maine already has habitability laws** - Landlords are required to maintain safe and livable units. Adding mold-specific laws is unnecessary and opens landlords to duplicative liability and lawsuits.

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