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2026  
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Maine's Rural Development Council

## **Testimony of Nancy Smith, CEO, GrowSmart Maine in support of LD 1995, To Require The Maine Office Of Community Affairs To Establish A Technical Assistance Materials Hub**

January 8, 2026

Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development,

GrowSmart Maine is a statewide non-partisan non-profit organization helping communities navigate change in alignment with smart growth. We advocate for smart growth policies and investments, share in thought leadership, host convenings, and provide technical assistance toward smart growth practices and outcomes. All this so Maine communities are places where people feel safe, that they belong, and where they can thrive.

Maine municipalities are asked to do a lot. This pressure comes from the state, yes, but also from the residents and businesses that want better services and more reliable infrastructure, from water and sewer, roads and sidewalks, to libraries, public concert venues, and ball fields. These assets are generated at the local level for quality of life and economic strength while protecting critical natural resources.

The Maine Office of Community Affairs (MOCA) was created to support communities in all these efforts. This first-stop for municipal support is going to play a critical role in how communities navigate change. LD 1995 charges MOCA with a key component of that work; creating and maintaining a hub of relevant technical assistance materials. Currently, government, quasi-governmental, and non-profit organizations create a wide range of resources, and speaking for GrowSmart, we actively market our work so that communities can find what they need. The resource hub at MOCA will make these connections much easier and faster. We plan to offer for inclusion dozens of recorded webinars and Summit keynotes as well as twenty-two printed Community Guides. I can see no downside to this proposal, and encourage the committee to pass LD 1995.

Sincerely,