



**LEGAL SERVICES
FOR MAINE ELDERS**

February 10, 2026

**Testimony of Marge Kilkelly for Legal Services for Maine Elders
Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development**

In support of LD 2124 An Act to Support Emergency Shelter Funding Using Revenue from the Real Estate Transfer Tax

Good afternoon, Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and esteemed Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development.

My name is Marge Kilkelly, and I am here today on behalf of Legal Services for Maine Elders. LSE provides free legal help statewide for Mainers aged 60 and older when their basic human needs are at stake. Our clients are generally low-income, some with medically complex conditions. The majority of our work focusses on housing issues.

I am speaking today in strong support of LD 2124 An Act to Support Emergency Shelter Funding Using Revenue from the Real Estate Transfer Tax.

Aging has its own challenges. Aging and being unhoused creates many additional issues. Older adults often wait until a total crisis to seek help, preferring to keep their struggles private. But it is important to note that Older Mainers are the fastest growing unhoused population in the state.

Homelessness among older Mainers (aged 55+) is rising significantly, with 740 individuals reported in 2024, an increase of nearly 200 from the previous year, driven largely by high housing costs.

Unhoused older people are at high risk for physical injuries, such as tripping on unplowed sidewalks, abuse and exploitation, and often have biological health profiles 10–20 years older than their chronological age.

Unhoused people 50 and older have mortality rates four times higher than the general population.

Shelter services are essential to support the emergent needs of this and other populations.

Please pass LD 2124.

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