



LD 2212 "An Act Making Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2026 and June 30, 2027"

Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, Senator Curry, Representative Gere and distinguished members of the Committees, my name is Peter Connell, and I reside in South Portland, ME. I represent the Manufactured Housing Association of Maine (MHAM) and am here to testify neither for nor against LD 2212.

The Manufactured Housing Association of Maine (MHAM) is a non-profit trade and professional association comprised of members who build, develop home sites, and operate Manufactured Home Communities, as well as sell and finance HUD Code Manufactured Homes and Maine Certified Modular Homes.

I have been proudly involved in the industry for over 40 years, in retail sales and manufacturing, as well as serving on the Manufactured Housing Board, representing Manufacturers, for nearly 20 years. We feel that our industry is an important part of solving the Maine housing crisis, and we want to ensure that proposed changes allow us to continue providing well-built, energy-efficient, and high-quality homes. To underscore our impact in 2025, our industry provided Maine people with 985 affordable homes.

A few of our concerns are as follows:

1. The transfer of responsibility for certification, technical assistance, and regulatory coordination of manufactured housing and associated positions from the Manufactured Housing Board (MHB) to the Maine Office of Community Affairs (MOCA)
2. The transfer of responsibility for manufactured housing communities from the Manufactured Housing Board (MHB) to the Maine Office of Community Affairs (MOCA)
3. If #1 #2 are implemented, making sure the staff is transferred in a timely manner without delay
4. Maintain State Administrative Agency for HUD Code manufactured homes
5. State Certification of modular homes
6. Implementation of Training and Certification requirements.

If the Maine Housing Board is abolished, the State of Maine will face significant unintended consequences that will increase costs for residents and businesses and could negatively impact the supply of affordable manufactured housing across the state.

A few states, including Pennsylvania, have previously relinquished their authority over the installation and inspection of manufactured homes after once operating successful state-run programs. When states cede this responsibility, the following consequences typically occur:

- Federal takeover of the program. HUD assumes control of the installation and inspection process—an approach that is far less effective than state and local oversight. Local officials are best positioned to understand Maine’s unique geography, climate conditions, and the needs of its residents.
- Loss of state and local authority in resolving installation issues. Under a federal program, determinations related to deficiencies or improper installations — including Plans of Corrective Action (POCAs) — are made solely by the federal government. Local and state officials are excluded from the process and cannot advocate on behalf of Maine consumers.
- Vulnerability during federal government shutdowns. During a shutdown, federal contractors are prohibited from performing inspections or related work, delaying home occupancy and leaving Maine residents unable to move into completed homes. In such cases, the State of Maine would be entirely dependent on federal action—or inaction.
- Mandatory use of HUD Form 309. Under federal administration, installers and inspectors must use HUD Form 309, which requires certification and verification of numerous site-specific and construction elements, including drainage, foundations, anchoring systems, utilities, electrical systems, and exterior and interior close-ups.
- Exposure to federal criminal liability. HUD Form 309 is subject to 18 U.S.C. § 1001, which makes it a federal crime to knowingly make false statements or certifications in matters under federal jurisdiction. Penalties can include significant fines and imprisonment.
- Inspector participation challenges. In states operating under HUD’s installation program, many qualified local inspectors have refused to participate due to the personal criminal liability associated with signing the federal form. This has led to serious program disruptions and delays.
- No indication of regulatory relief. A proposal to address these enforcement concerns was submitted by the State of Pennsylvania to HUD, but it was rejected by its Federal Advisory Committee, indicating there is currently no appetite at the federal level to modify these requirements or penalties.

Once a state relinquishes control of its manufactured housing installation program, it is virtually impossible to reclaim that authority due to budgetary or other issues. For these reasons, it is critical that Maine’s long-standing, effective, and locally administered installation program remain intact through the Maine Housing Board.

Preserving this program protects Maine consumers, supports affordable housing, and ensures that decisions affecting Maine residents are made in Maine—not Washington, D.C.

I will be happy to answer any questions and provide any information requested. Thank you so much for the opportunity.