



MAINE OFFICE OF
**Community
Affairs**

**Testimony of the Maine Office of Community Affairs
Greg Gilbert, State Building Official
March 5, 2026**

**Before the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development
In Support of LD 2224 An Act to Reduce Certain Costs Associated with Residential
Construction**

Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and distinguished Members of the joint standing committee on Housing and Economic Development, my name is Greg Gilbert, State building Official in the Maine Office of Community Affairs. I am testifying in support of 2224, An Act to Reduce Certain Costs Associated with Residential Construction.

The Maine Office of Community Affairs, or MOCA, was created in 2024 to foster communication and partnerships between the State and Maine communities. Our charge is to engage with municipalities, tribal governments and regional councils to provide coordinated and efficient planning, technical assistance and financial support to better plan for challenges, pursue solutions and create stronger, more resilient communities.

Sections 1 through 3 direct the Technical Building Codes and Standards Board to amend Maine's Uniform Building and Energy Code to revise two specific elevator safety provisions. As drafted, the bill places language in statute that specifies the use of the 2021 edition of the code. Because the code is routinely updated, this approach will quickly become outdated. In addition, the bill describes the safety features using terminology that does not fully align with the technical language I do not believe was intended by the working groups, which may create confusion in implementation and result in unsafe conditions.

MOCA recommends that the Committee instead include a similar directive in unallocated language and revise the terminology, so it is consistent with the code. We have provided suggested edits in the attachment. These changes do not alter the intended outcome but rather clarify the directive and avoid unnecessary confusion. They also reinforce the principle that Maine's expert board, charged with adopting and maintaining the building codes, should determine the most technically sound method of achieving the Legislature's policy goals, without creating a precedent of embedding highly specific code provisions directly in statute.

For these reasons, MOCA supports LD 2224 with our suggested amendments. Thank you for your time, and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

MOCA Proposal for LD 2224 Public Hearing

This language proposed for LD 2224: An Act to Reduce Certain Costs Associated with Residential Construction is to replace sections 1-3, as shown below, with allocated language directed to the Technical Codes and Standards Board to update the requirements for Elevator 2-way communication and smoke draft protection assemblies.

Sec. 1. ~~10 MRSA §9722, sub-§6, ¶B-1, as amended by PL 2025, c. 46, §§1 to 3, is further amended by amending subparagraph (4) to read:~~

~~(4) That buildings used to house livestock, store harvested crops or cultivate crops are not subject to the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code. The exemption in this subparagraph does not include the cultivation of cannabis regulated under Title 22 or 28-B; and~~

Sec. 2. ~~10 MRSA §9722, sub-§6, ¶B-1, as amended by PL 2025, c. 46, §§1 to 3, is further amended by enacting a new subparagraph (6) to read:~~

~~(6) That smoke partitions for elevator hoistway doors as required in Chapter 30 of the 2021 edition of the International Building Code are not required under the Maine Uniform Building Code; and~~

Sec. 3. ~~10 MRSA §9722, sub-§6, ¶B-1, as amended by PL 2025, c. 46, §§1 to 3, is further amended by enacting a new subparagraph (7) to read:~~

~~(7) That an elevator emergency 2-way communication system that includes both visual and audible communication in each elevator car as required in Chapter 30 of the 2021 edition of the International Building Code is not required under the Maine Uniform Building Code.~~

Sec. 1. Technical Building Codes and Standards Board within the Maine Office of Community Affairs to Initiate Rulemaking. The Technical Building Codes and Standards Board (TBCSB) shall initiate rulemaking to remove any requirements for smoke and draft protection assemblies for elevator hoistway doors and remove requirements for 2-way emergency video communication systems in elevators. The Board shall initiate rule making by August 1, 2026. The Board shall report back to the committee on the outcome of rulemaking by January 1, 2027.