



Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development

Testimony of Laura Mitchell, Executive Director, Maine Affordable Housing Coalition

**IN FAVOR – LD 2225 – An Act to Support Municipal Enforcement of Residential Construction Laws,
Codes and Regulations
3.5.26**

Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Laura Mitchell, and I serve as Executive Director of the Maine Affordable Housing Coalition. We represent 140 business members and more than 3,000 individuals advocating for the construction and preservation of affordable homes for all Maine people.

I am testifying in support of LD 2225, another thoughtful recommendation that emerged from the LD 1375 Work Group.

LD 2225 is not about deregulation. It is about modernization, clarity, and capacity. If we want to build more homes in Maine, safely and affordably, our code enforcement system must work efficiently at every level.

While much of MAHC's focus is on reducing unnecessary costs, we must also ensure that our building code system functions predictably, consistently, and efficiently. LD 2225 advances that goal in several important ways.

- First, by adopting the ICC/Modular Building Institute Standard for Off-site Construction, Maine formally integrates modern modular and off-site construction standards into the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code. **This provides clarity for municipalities and builders and supports the expansion of industrialized housing: one of the most promising pathways for lowering per-unit construction costs and increasing production speed.**
- Second, the bill creates consistency in when building code updates take effect. **Establishing predictable effective dates reduces confusion, avoids mid-project rule changes, and protects projects from unexpected redesign costs and delays. In housing development, unpredictability is cost.**
- Third, LD 2225 strengthens training and support for code enforcement officers and launches a three-year pilot to promote regionalized code enforcement. Many smaller communities lack sufficient capacity. **Regional approaches can improve consistency, speed permitting timelines, and reduce administrative bottlenecks that slow housing production.**

Finally, the modest increase in the plan review surcharge ensures the system is sustainably funded so municipalities can properly administer and enforce codes.

I respectfully urge the Committee to support LD 2225.

Thank you for your leadership.