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*Testimony of Representative Ambureen Rana in support of*  
**LD 2176, An Act to Safeguard Personal Information and Strengthen Tenant Rights in Maine**

*Before the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary*

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of the strike-and-replace amendment to **LD 2176, An Act to Safeguard Personal Information and Strengthen Tenant Rights in Maine**

I have come to the committee before to advocate for tenants rights; a matter that is so important to the people of Bangor. Bangor is a city where renters make up a significant and growing share of our community. We have seen firsthand how fragile housing stability can be for working families, older adults and people living on fixed incomes. Bangor's tight rental market, aging housing stock and rising costs make strong tenant protections not only important, they are necessary.

For years, my work has focused on renters' rights, housing access and ensuring safe, dignified housing conditions for people across the state. I have worked on tenant protections and homelessness prevention, with a focus on expanding affordable housing, improving data infrastructure and reducing discrimination and evictions. These experiences, and the stories I continue to hear from Bangor residents, are why I am proud to cosponsor LD 2176 and why I am deeply supportive of this amendment as a critically needed update to Maine's tenant-protection laws.

In Bangor, I regularly hear from older residents who live alone and are at real risk of exploitation when their personal information is exposed. A single disclosure of a senior tenant's phone number, address or financial details can open the door to scams or predatory actors who deliberately target older Mainers. This amendment helps shut that door.

Parents living in multi-unit buildings also share concerns about who can access their family's information, especially families who have moved multiple times seeking safe, stable housing. When children's names, unit numbers or even emergency contact information can be improperly shared, the entire sense of safety within a building erodes.

Organizations supporting survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault regularly remind us that the true safety of a new home depends on certainty, certainty that a landlord will not disclose a survivor's whereabouts, contact details or identifying information to anyone who might use it to cause harm. For many survivors, housing stability is the difference between breaking a cycle of violence and returning to danger. Privacy is not a luxury in these cases; it is a lifeline.

And we must be honest: one of the most immoral forms of information misuse we have seen across Maine in recent months is the disclosure or threatened disclosure of immigrants' personal information. When a landlord reveals or threatens to reveal a tenant's immigration status, place of birth or documentation history, that is not just inappropriate; it is a weapon. It is a form of coercion that has real,

chilling effects on families who are simply trying to work, raise children and live in peace. No Mainer, immigrant or native-born, should have their most sensitive information used to intimidate them out of their home. For immigrant Mainers in Bangor and beyond, protection from this kind of targeting is overdue.

This amendment responds to those realities by creating a clear and enforceable prohibition. Under the amendment, a landlord, the landlord's agent or anyone acting at their direction may not disclose a tenant's personal information with the intent to harass, threaten, intimidate or otherwise cause a tenant to vacate their home.

The definition of "personal information" is comprehensive and appropriate. It includes identifying details, contact information, financial or billing information and information about a tenant's status as a survivor of a crime. This reflects the many ways in which personal data can be weaponized against tenants of all backgrounds.

The bill provides three key exceptions:

- the tenant consents;
- a judicial warrant requires disclosure; or
- an exigent circumstance makes immediate action necessary, such as when fire or emergency rescue personnel require access to a premises or information about the inhabitants.

This framework is clear, balanced and rooted in due process.

The amendment also provides meaningful enforcement. Tenants may recover actual damages or \$1,000, whichever is greater, and may seek injunctive relief. Additionally, violations constitute a violation of the Maine Unfair Trade Practices Act, allowing the Attorney General's office to take action when broader patterns of misconduct arise.

For Bangor residents, and renters across Maine, stable housing depends on far more than a roof and four walls. It depends on privacy, safety and the assurance that personal information cannot be used as leverage or intimidation. As more families rent, as more older Mainers struggle to stay in their homes and as more immigrants make vital contributions to our communities, updating these protections is essential.

This amendment strengthens Maine's laws in practical, targeted ways that protect seniors, survivors, families, immigrants and renters of every background. I am grateful for the collaboration that went into this draft and proud to support this thoughtful and necessary update to Maine's tenant-protection statutes.

Thank you for your time and for your careful attention to this important issue.