

TESTIMONY OF Timothy B MacLeod

TO THE JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY

WRITTEN TESTIMONY PROVIDED IN FAVOR OF LD # 2053

“AN ACT TO EXEMPT BUILDINGS USED TO CULTIVATE CROPS FROM THE MAINE UNIFORM BUILDING AND ENERGY CODE”

Date of Hearing: January 22, 2024

Honorable Senator Beebe-Center, Honorable Representative Salisbury, and Distinguished Members of the Joint Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety, my name is Tim MacLeod; I am a lifelong resident of Auburn. Thank you for taking the time to consider LD2053. This would significantly impact my future in producing food for my family. Due to the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code (MUBEC) enforcement in Auburn, I cannot obtain a permit to erect my greenhouse. My metal and glass greenhouse is over 200 square feet and thus requires a permit in Auburn. Since the only exceptions to the building code are the housing of livestock and storage of harvest crops, I cannot use my greenhouse to grow crops in the early spring. LD 2053 would fix this by adding the cultivation of crops into the exceptions. I would need to remove my greenhouse every winter or provide engineered plans to show that the building could sustain the snow load. While building code is essential, minimal risk would be involved if a greenhouse were damaged by wind or snow. From a practical standpoint, greenhouses normally have steep pitch roofs or round roofs, and snow slides off or would be cleaned off by the owner, who does not want damage to occur.

LD 2053 would allow citizens to build greenhouses or hoop houses to cultivate crops state-wide. This would also expand the very short growing season we currently have and increase the fairness of building such structures within larger cities that are bound to enforce the MUBEC standards.

Thank you for your work; please support LD 2053 to allow everyone to grow healthy food closer to home.

Sincerely,

Timothy MacLeod

Resident of Auburn