



CITY OF BANGOR

Committee on Housing and Economic Development

Testimony Neither in Support or Opposition to LD 445 – “An Act to Stimulate Housing Production by Increasing the Threshold Before Participation in the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code is Mandatory”

Feb. 27, 2025

Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and distinguished members of the Committee on Housing and Economic Development. I am Debbie Laurie, City Manager for the City of Bangor, and I am providing testimony neither in support or opposition to LD 445, “An Act to Stimulate Housing Production by Increasing the Threshold Before Participation in the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code is Mandatory,” as the purpose of the proposed amendment is unclear.

The Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code (MUBEC) ensures uniformity in building and energy standards, focusing on safety, energy efficiency, public safety and environmental sustainability. Communities with populations in excess of 4,000 people have been required to enforce and administer MUBEC since 2011. Communities with less than 4,000 people may opt-in and enforce and administer MUBEC.

The title of the bill indicates that MUBEC is a barrier to housing development within the State of Maine, yet the proposed change in the language merely relieves 69 municipalities, with 440,079 residents, of their current requirement to enforce and administer MUBEC.

Under this proposal, Bangor and 21 other communities would still be utilizing MUBEC thereby continuing to promote building standard uniformity and safety. These communities typically have greater housing density allowances, established infrastructure, offer robust municipal services and also need additional housing in order to meet our collective State housing needs.

If MUBEC is an impediment to housing production or other forms of economic development, as noted in the title, then we ask if it would be more prudent to review and revise MUBEC while balancing the safety, energy efficiency, public safety and environmental sustainability of our building standards, thereby balancing the safety needs with the housing demand?

For these reasons, I ask that the Committee determine why MUBEC is important to our residents and what if any provisions should be reviewed and revised if they are creating an insurmountable barrier to our State’s ability to increase housing production. Thank you for your consideration and please do not hesitate to reach out with questions.

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