

Helen Watts  
Bowdoin  
LD 445

My name is Helen C. Watts, PE. I am a structural engineer in Maine.

This bill, if passed, would increase the MUBEC threshold from 4,000 to 10,000. Using 2019 census data from the State only 86 or 16.2% of municipalities are over the MUBEC threshold of 4,000 population. If this bill goes through it would reduce that number to 22 or 4.1%.

My concerns are as follows:

1. I'm a member of SEAM (Structural Engineers Association of Maine) and ASCE (American Society of Civil Engineers) and I found out about this from an MOBIA email sent to my boss today (2/25). MBOIA is the code enforcement organization in Maine. Not very much notice to the organizations that would know the most about it.

2. We have been trying to get the MUBEC (the Maine Uniform building and Energy Code) applied uniformly throughout Maine; we should be going to no communities exempted - UNIFORM.

3. Having no exemptions would make the code easier to apply across the state. It would mean that the quality, the durability, the resilience of our buildings will be better, when bad things happen. It would mean that more people could be assured of code-minimum buildings (well, assuming that the code is enforced). The buildings would also have a smaller carbon footprint.

4. The MUBEC is not a barrier to housing construction; this bill won't have any meaningful impact on housing construction costs.

I am opposed to this LD-445. Please do what you can to stop this.