

Mabon Young
Bar Harbor
LD 445

Hello, my name is Mabon Young, and thank you for this opportunity to testify against LD 445.

While I am absolutely aware that Maine is in need of increased housing production, the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code is not by any means the most influential obstacle in the way of that goal. If anything, this code offers Maine residents a guarantee of safe and comfortable living spaces; would you rather live in a home you can feel confident in the construction of and don't have to worry about the weather in, or one where you have to manage flooding basements, cold drafts, and inflated heating bills every time it rains or snows? Any increased costs of construction imposed by the code are very likely to be paid off by the energy bill savings offered by the energy efficiency requirements, to say nothing of the non-financial health and comfort benefits. As such, I see no reason to scale back its scope so heavily.

As of 2024, only the 22 most populated cities in Maine have over 10,000 residents. The proposed amendment to the code would make 68 small cities and towns exempt from it, and consequently make their residents more vulnerable to being taken advantage of and offered poorly built, ventilated, insulated, and moisture-proofed homes. The moisture proofing and air sealing is an especially pressing concern, as mounting climate change will only continue to make our wet seasons wetter, and insufficiently sealed homes are more susceptible to molding and rotting caused by weather. These small towns already tend to be more vulnerable to climatic events, and scaling back this code would only worsen that vulnerability.

Any marginal housing production benefit offered by this proposal is vastly outweighed by the potential risk it would create for many of Maine's small towns. I urge you to vote ought not to pass on LD 445. Thank you for your time and consideration.