



LD 546, Resolve, to Require the Preparation of Preapproved Building Types

Testimony in Support

March 4, 2025

Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and Honorable Members of Committee on Housing and Economic Development,

My name is Elizabeth Frazier, and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of the Maine Real Estate & Development Association in support of LD546, Resolve, to Require the Preparation of Preapproved Building Types.

LD 546 would direct the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry (DACF) to adopt preapproved building types that can be used to streamline the construction of new housing units in Maine. The intent of this resolve is to create a dialogue between DACF, planners, and housing creators, to expedite the construction of new dwelling units across the state.

LD 546 would take into consideration the things that govern how a housing unit gets built – local land use, statewide land use, and the current Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code (MUBEC) and National Fire Protection Association Life Safety Code. Bringing these parties together will to create template designs for building projects will help jump-start small and community housing creation in Maine.

The expense of developing a project is often not just in the cost of land but in the time and actual dollars spent on planning, architectural and environmental design, and permit approval processes that can take years to finalize. This high expense is a barrier to housing creation and inadvertently creates a system whereby only those with deep pockets can afford to building housing – they can afford the high risk/high reward proposition. For most housing creators, there is no special financing available for development costs, and certainly not in the costs of defending and working toward a permit approval. These added costs, without any financing or support mechanism, can prevent new or small-sized housing creators from using innovative solutions to provide housing in their communities.

We think LD 546 is a step in the right direction, and we look forward to continued collaboration to break down barriers to housing creation and prevent a playing field where the only ones who can afford to participate are those who can afford a high-risk/high-reward proposition. Please vote Ought to Pass on LD 546.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth M. Frazier, On Behalf of the Maine Real Estate & Development Association