

Justin Brown
Farmingdale
LD 427

State of Maine Legislature – LD 427 (HP 281) Public Hearing Comments from Justin Brown

Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and members of the Housing and Economic Development Committee, I want to thank you all for the opportunity to speak on this item. My name is Justin Brown, and I have been a Code Enforcement Officer for approximately 19 years.

I am submitting testimony today in opposition of LD 427.

This bill appears to effectively strip a municipalities ability to regulate minimum parking standards and allows simply for recommendations for any “development, land use or occupancy of land or a building”. This is extremely broad and would appear to cover everything from public trail access to multistory apartment buildings.

The infrastructure of communities across the state differs greatly allowing for municipalities to adapt their ordinances to best serve the needs of those communities. Parking is no exception. This change would effectively leave the decision-making regarding parking to developers. While I can appreciate that many businesses understand that parking is often essential for their business. That said, I can envision a scenario in which a large retailer who would need, for example, 100 parking spaces based on local ordinance would opt to put in 25 spaces because a public parking garage happened to be only a few blocks away. The reality is that the public parking garage was likely designed for specific needs. Even if that parking garage design anticipated some additional unknown future need, it was likely part of a growth plan reviewed by the Municipality. This additional burden could have a negative impact on existing local businesses that rely on that parking. This is one of many potential examples of unintended consequences that could result from this proposal.

I want to be clear that I am not in favor of an over abundance of parking. What I am in favor of is properly planned parking based on the needs of a community. This proposal appears to put parking decisions in the hands of individual developers. I can only see that as a step away from what I would consider “well planned”.

Thank you for your time.

Justin Brown
Farmingdale Maine