

RE: Oppose LD 427 (An Act to Prohibit Mandatory Parking Space Minimums in State and Municipal Building Codes)

Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Sen. Curry, Representative Gere, and Committee Members:

To the members of the Committee on Housing and Economic Development,

The Midcoast Council of Governments is formally stating our opposition to the language of LD 427.

Our opposition is based on concerns we heard from municipal leaders and Planning Board members when we were providing assistance to implement LD 2003 (An Act To Implement the Recommendations of the Commission To Increase Housing Opportunities in Maine by Studying Zoning and Land Use Restrictions). While assisting a mixture of towns ranging from 1,000 to 5,000 in population, the main concern voiced by these municipalities was that eliminating the need for parking assumes the availability of public transit. MCOG is largely rural. In the MCOG region, there are only regularly scheduled bus routes in the Bath-Brunswick Area, Rockland, and Belfast, leaving over 60 of our communities where a car is necessary for residents to navigate the region.

Parking requirements are different in each community. Towns with public parking areas are pro-active with reducing minimum parking limits in their downtown and villages; whereas municipalities with limited town-owned spaces need the requirement so the developers can locate parking on their parcels at no expense to the taxpayer.

Sincerely,

Maxwell Johnstone, Senior Planner at Midcoast Council of Governments