



**Before the Joint Standing Committee on Housing & Economic Development
In Favor of LD 128 – An Act to Support Permitting of Certain Multifamily Housing
Developments Under the Site Location of Development Laws**

Greetings, Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development,

My name is Jared Gay, and I am the Director of Public Policy and Advocacy at United Way of Southern Maine (UWSM). Through our work, we see firsthand the challenges families face in securing safe, affordable housing—a foundational element for economic security and community well-being.

Maine is experiencing a severe housing shortage that affects families, older adults, and our workforce. Too many Mainers are being forced to make impossible choices between rent, food, and medical care. Many are left with no options at all, living in unsafe or unaffordable conditions. Businesses across the state also struggle to fill positions due to the lack of available workforce housing. The solution is clear: Maine must build more housing, and we must remove unnecessary barriers to getting it done.

United Ways of Maine supports LD 128 because it takes a meaningful step toward streamlining the permitting process for multifamily housing, reducing unnecessary red tape, costs, and delays. In 2023, the state-commissioned HR&A housing study identified the need for 80,000 new homes by 2030 and highlighted streamlined permitting as a key strategy to meeting this goal. LD 128 aligns with that recommendation by ensuring that state resources for housing development are used as efficiently as possible.

Delays in permitting can make projects financially unfeasible or significantly slow progress, leaving families waiting for homes that should already exist.

Thank you for your consideration and for your commitment to addressing Maine’s housing crisis. LD 128 is a step toward ensuring that Maine’s investments in affordable housing are maximized, helping to create stronger, more resilient communities where all Maine people have a safe place to call home.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.