



Testimony of The Maine Real Estate Managers Association

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF LD 641 — “AN ACT TO SUPPORT DIVERSION EFFORTS TO ADDRESS HOMELESSNESS IN MAINE”

Tuesday, March 18, 2025

Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and the esteemed members of the Committee on Housing and Economic Development. My name is Sherrin Vail, and I am speaking on behalf of the Maine Real Estate Manager’s Association. We strongly support LD 641, An Act to Support Diversion Efforts to Address Homelessness in Maine, because preventing homelessness before it starts is not only the right thing to do, it's also the most cost-effective approach in a time of skyrocketing costs to operate rental housing.

Our member property management companies provide affordable housing for those in need across the state of Maine. It is important to us that our residents are afforded every opportunity to maintain their housing, despite increasing costs for food, gas, utilities and everyday life expenses.

The Housing Problem Solving (HPS) program is a proven solution. In 2024, HPS helped 663 people stay housed with a budget of just \$750,000 – that's only \$1,131 per person. Compare that to the alternative: \$36,000 per year for a shelter bed or over \$7,000 for rapid rehousing. Every dollar invested in HPS saves taxpayers money while protecting individuals and families from homelessness.

With the additional funding proposed in LD 641, HPS could prevent homelessness for twice as many people—over 1,000 Mainers each year. That means fewer children are forced to change schools, fewer workers losing their jobs due to housing instability, and fewer families torn apart by avoidable crises.

I urge you to support LD 641 and invest in a program that saves money, strengthens communities, and most importantly, keeps Mainers in their homes.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely, Sherrin Vail, Maine Real Estate Manager’s Association