



PORTLAND
Regional Chamber of Commerce

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Testimony in Support of LD 1184—An Act to Require Municipal Reporting on Residential Building Permits, Dwelling Units Permitted and Demolished and Certificate of Occupancy Issued

Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development
April 8, 2025

Senator Curry, Representative Gere and members of the Committee on Housing and Economic Development,

I am Eamonn Dundon, the Director of Advocacy of the Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce. We represent 1,300 businesses in our region who employ over 75,000 Mainers. We are submitting this testimony today to express our organization's strong support for LD 1194.

Since 2021, our organization has undertaken the task of tracking housing approvals, construction progress, and completions for residential projects in the City of Portland. This work involves combing through Portland Planning Board minutes, reviewing application materials to identify unit counts, sizes, tenure arrangements, and affordability restrictions, and following up with building permit and certificate of occupancy data—as well as direct visual confirmation of construction activity. In 2022, we expanded this effort by assigning an intern to replicate the process in several of Portland's peer communities, including Biddeford, Saco, Westbrook, Lewiston, and Auburn. That experience highlighted a major challenge: each municipality reports and shares this data differently, making comprehensive and comparative analysis extremely difficult.

Gathering this data, even for one municipality is time-consuming and complex. Doing so consistently across multiple communities is nearly impossible without a standardized, statewide approach. A uniform reporting system is essential to track our progress toward Maine's ambitious housing goals—and to ensure that policymakers, stakeholders, and the public have access to reliable, comparable data.

Fortunately, Maine already has a strong foundation to build on. The Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG) is piloting a promising regional housing data collection initiative. Communities ranging from Bridgton and North Yarmouth to Portland and Westbrook—despite differing greatly in size and staff capacity—are consistently reporting their housing data. GPCOG now makes this information available through its "[Great Maine Neighborhoods](#)" Housing Data Dashboard in a clear and accessible format.

LD 1184 would take this regional success and scale it statewide, turning a best practice into a statutory requirement. This effort aligns directly with actions 1.1 and 2.1 of the recently released [Roadmap for the Future of Housing Production in Maine](#) and lays the necessary groundwork for other actions in the report. HR&A Advisors, the state's third-party housing policy consultant, underscored the importance of standardized data collection as a prerequisite to tackling the broader barriers to housing production.

With the groundwork already laid by GPCOG and new technical assistance capacity coming through the Maine Office of Community Affairs, now is the right time to implement a statewide reporting requirement. Failing to do so would leave us flying blind—unable to measure the impact of policy reforms or assess where progress is being made.

We thank you for your time and commitment to addressing Maine's housing shortage. We urge you to vote in favor of LD 1184.