



60 Community Drive | Augusta, ME 04330-9486

1-800-452-8786 (in state)
(T) 207-623-8428
(F) 207-624-0129

Testimony of the Maine Municipal Association

In Opposition to

LD 1184 - An Act to Require Municipal Reporting on Residential Building Permits, Dwelling Units Permitted and Demolished and Certificates of Occupancy Issued

April 8, 2025

Sen. Curry, Rep. Gere and distinguished members of the Housing and Economic Development Committee, my name is Rebecca Graham, and I am submitting testimony in opposition to LD 1184, at the direction of MMA's Legislative Policy Committee (LPC). Our LPC is composed of municipal officials from across Maine, elected by their peers to represent communities with vastly different enforcement staff, resources and capacities.

As recognized by the inclusion of a preliminary fiscal note, this bill is a mandate on local government and either needs to be funded at 90% of the cost of the expanded burden or receive a 2/3 override of that obligation by both bodies of the legislature.

Lost in a blanket reporting option is the lack of a statewide database for that information to be adequately collected, a lack of local processes to capture the data in many cases, and the use of code enforcement officers working for multiple communities with no access to computer systems in each community because many communities only have a computer provided to them by the state in the early 2000's. Rather than minimal increased costs belied by the fiscal note, the technology needs alone for this to be new activity to occur would be significant.

Most municipalities do not collect information on demolished dwellings, any of the financial information data of the occupants that is already available through Maine State Housing Authority funded projects, or expansions of dwellings that occur within the existing envelope in most cases. This would be a significant expansion of CEO duties in the vast majority of municipalities. The categories of the types of dwellings are also not translated to municipal reality and local building permits would require amending. Standardized building permit forms include remodel, mobile home, modular, addition, shed, barn, deck, chimney, bathroom, garage.

This is a mandate without structure to support the data collection at the state level or increased investment in the code enforcement program to date. Officials ask respectfully that you build the statewide plane before you ask local government to fly it, and if you chose to advance this new obligation that you pay commit to paying for it as enthusiastically to match the burden it will create statewide.