



STATE OF MAINE
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF POLICY INNOVATION AND THE FUTURE
181 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0181

Testimony Neither For Nor Against

L.D. 1287, An Act to Support Workforce Development by Establishing the Housing Stability Fund

April 25, 2025

Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development, the Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future offers this testimony neither for nor against **LD 1287, An Act to Support Workforce Development by Establishing the Housing Stability Fund**.

While the acute lack of housing supply is a national problem, the Mills Administration has taken historic action to address it. Working in bipartisan fashion with Legislature, we have invested more than \$314 million in proven affordable housing programs for renters and homeowners alike. Over 1,500 affordable housing units have been fully constructed, completed and occupied since Governor Mills took office, while more than 1,400 units are under construction and another 2,500+ are in the underwriting stage. This is the largest pipeline that MaineHousing has ever experienced in its more than 50-year history.

We have also taken a leadership role in addressing the zoning and land use restrictions that make it unnecessarily difficult for communities to add the additional homes that Maine people need. Homeowners are now adding accessory dwelling units for loved ones or to provide desperately needed rental units, while developers are utilizing the modest density increases authorized through bipartisan action taken in the 130th and 131st Legislature.

Furthermore, the Administration has worked closely with the Legislature to address the emergency housing needs of thousands of Maine people over the past several years, including support for winter warming shelters, the year-round shelter network, rapid rehousing initiatives and other programs that have provided short and long-term housing relief for those experiencing homelessness. We are particularly excited to see the bipartisan Home for Good Program, which will provide permanent supportive housing and 24/7 on-site services for people experiencing chronic homelessness, announce its first five awards for initiatives to be developed in Sanford, Portland, Augusta, Auburn and Bangor. That program has the potential to make Maine the first state in the nation to end chronic homelessness.

LD 1287 proposes to build upon recent, successful work creating housing stability for those with a clear path to financial independence, but who need short-term housing support to get there. Its strategic approach utilizes limited dollars to help support critical workforce participation.

Over the last two years and with less than \$1.2 million, a total of 240 households received assistance with security deposits, and 109 families accessed short-term rental assistance using an average of just 4 months of support. These outcomes demonstrate the program's efficiency, strategic approach and targeted impact.



STATE OF MAINE
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF POLICY INNOVATION AND THE FUTURE
181 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0181

The Administration is unable to identify sufficient revenues to fund this proposal in the current budget environment, but we are willing to work with the Committee and the bill's sponsors if a funding path is identified. We see it as a more feasible and strategic approach than other housing stability proposals currently under consideration.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.