

Amanda Scrivani
Portland
LD 1534

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to LD 1534.

This proposed legislation would open the door to municipal-level rent control and eviction policies, which would create a patchwork of confusing, burdensome, and ultimately harmful regulations across Maine. While well-intentioned, this bill would have serious unintended consequences that would undermine our housing market, discourage development, and drive small landlords out of the rental business—at a time when we desperately need more housing, not less.

As a small landlord, I can speak firsthand to the challenges of maintaining quality rental housing while managing increasing costs. Revoking state protections like no-cause evictions and replacing them with municipal policies makes it harder to address tenants who may pose risks to neighbors or the property. This not only threatens the safety of other tenants, but also increases legal costs and uncertainty for housing providers. Many small landlords will simply choose to exit the market rather than take on this risk, worsening Maine's housing shortage.

The bureaucratic burden imposed by this bill is also significant. Requiring municipalities to file reports with multiple state agencies and authorizing them to set unique rules around rent and evictions will lead to legal chaos. Tenants, landlords, courts, and attorneys rely on the predictability of statewide housing laws. Fragmenting this system will only increase confusion and disputes.

Further, rent control discourages investment in new housing and reduces the value of existing properties. We've already seen this in Portland, where rent stabilization has led to a decline in multi-unit property values. That means lower tax revenues for towns and cities, shifting the financial burden onto single-family homeowners—many of whom are already struggling with rising costs.

Maine's rental market is already adjusting. Many landlords are reporting longer vacancies and are lowering rents to stay competitive. We do not need artificial price controls that further distort the market and trap tenants in place, limiting mobility and reducing available housing stock.

LD 1534 may be designed to protect tenants, but in practice, it would do more harm than good. It threatens housing availability, destabilizes the rental market, and places an undue burden on the very people who provide housing in our communities. I urge the committee to reject this bill.

Respectfully submitted,
Amanda Scrivani