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April 29, 2025

AARP Maine testimony in support of LD 1272 An Act to Address the Housing Crisis by Reducing Barriers to Building More Accessory Dwelling Units

Greetings Senator Curry, Representative Gere and members of the Committee on Housing and Economic Development. My name is Bridget Quinn, Associate State Director of Advocacy and Outreach for AARP Maine.

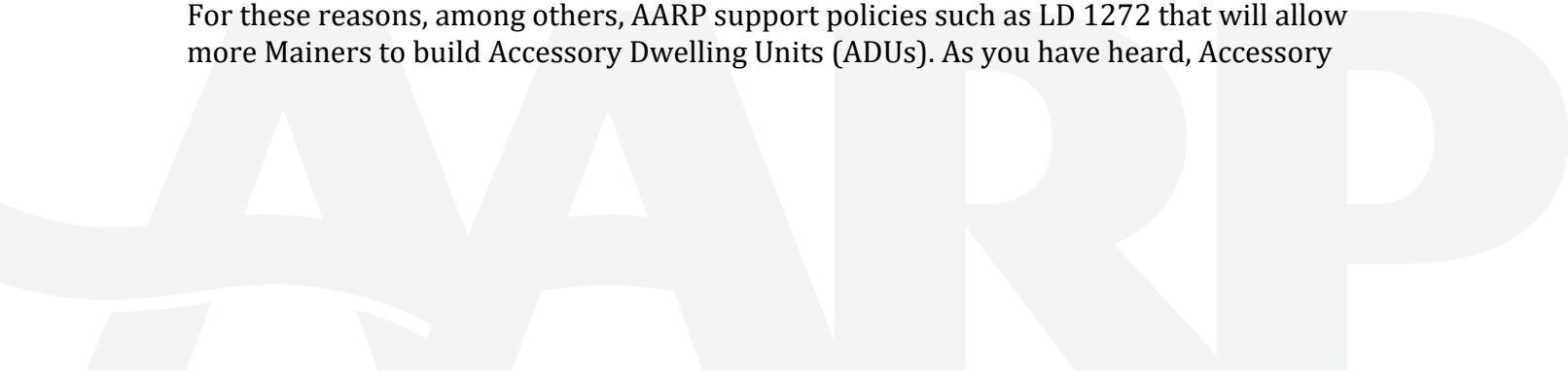
AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering Americans 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. On behalf of our nearly 200,000 members statewide, thank you for the opportunity to share testimony today. Today I am testifying in support of LD 1272.

According to AARP's 2024 Home and Community Preferences Survey, approximately 75% of adults 50-plus indicate they would consider moving into an ADU for one or more reasons, such as to live close to someone (64%), if they needed help with everyday activities (61%), to live close to someone who needed care (55%), to lower their housing costs (54%), or to downsize (47%). According to the same survey, roughly half of adults 50-plus say they are not confident their current community will meet their needs as they age, prompting many to consider moving in the future.

Among Mainers, a 2024 survey conducted by AARP found that, a majority of Maine residents 45-plus say staying in their homes as they get older (88%) is very important to them. Though Mainers want to remain in their homes seven-in ten Maine residents 45-plus are concerned about staying in their own home as they get older (71%). When considering their future needs eight out of ten (82%) Maine residents 45-plus would prefer to receive care for themselves or family members at home with caregiver assistance.

To summarize, Mainers want to age in place but are worried about being able to do so. The majority would rather remain in their communities with the support of a loved one than look to facility-based care. Yet, we do not have enough housing in Maine currently and the needs of care partners can put a strain on families if they are living distances apart.

For these reasons, among others, AARP support policies such as LD 1272 that will allow more Mainers to build Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs). As you have heard, Accessory



dwelling units (ADUs) are independent housing units, typically (but not always) created on single-family lots through remodeling or expanding the existing home or constructed as a detached dwelling. ADUs are a tool that can;

- Increase and diversify choice in where and how to live for people of all ages.
- Provide more naturally affordable (unsubsidized) housing to serve a range of incomes.
- Enable older adults to downsize in their community, thereby aging in place.
- Create convenient living arrangements for care and support of family members
- And provide an alternative for aging parents to live, instead of a nursing home.

LD 1272 offers an opportunity for Maine to make ADUs more available to Mainers who wish to build them. The legislation provides uniform policy so that Mainers across the state are able to build ADUs should they wish. This could then allow more Mainers to seek arrangements that work for them and facilitate aging in place, creating needed housing and support Maine's family care partners. For these reasons we urge this committee to support LD 1272.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. If you have any questions for me I can be reached at bquinn@aarpp.org.

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