

Testimony of Patrick Woodcock
Before the Joint Standing Committees on Housing and Economic Development
In Support of L.D. 1272
“An Act to Address the Housing Crisis by Reducing Barriers to
Building More Accessory Dwelling Units”
April 29, 2025

Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and members of Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development, my name is Patrick Woodcock. I am here on behalf of the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, representing a network of 5,000+ small to large businesses. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on L.D. 1272, “An Act to Address the Housing Crisis by Reducing Barriers to Building More Accessory Dwelling Units.” I want to thank Speaker Fecteau for bringing this legislation forward and working to unlock housing development.

There are a number of components of this legislation that would be part of a comprehensive effort to develop additional housing opportunities for Mainers. First, the legislation would build on L.D. 2003 to reduce accessory dwelling units (ADU), which can be a component to add density, provide income streams to Maine households, and provide additional housing and/or rental units. While Maine has had a limited number of ADUs constructed there are states that have seen success in this model to add housing units comparatively quickly. In particular, the elimination of requirements for sprinkler systems would address a significant financial burden. The Maine Chamber of Commerce has been supportive of legislation to apply this to all single-family homes. While we welcome this proposal we would reiterate our support for a statewide prohibition on single family homes as well.

In addition, section 13 of the bill would, as some other legislation has proposed, to increase state subdivision review from 3 to 5 parcels. This is aligned with a recommendation from the HR&A report provided to this Committee earlier this week. In addition, more than 20 organizations wrote to the Legislature earlier this month recommending that this recommendation be adopted by this Legislature. This will not only reduce the regulatory barriers for housing development, but also allow the Department to better prioritize limited resources to speed reviews of other economic development projects.

The Maine State Chamber of Commerce would like to thank Speaker Fecteau for this legislation and encourages the Committee to support L.D 1272.