

May 2nd, 2025

LD 1765 Ensure Affordability and Stability in Housing for Mobile Home Park Residents

Good morning, Senator Chip Curry, Representative Traci Gere, and esteemed members of the Housing and economic development committee.

My name is Anghy Tehuitzil, I live in Augusta, and I am here representing Maine Youth Power, a youth-led youth movement building power to win human dignity, equity, access and a livable future across rural and suburban Maine. Today, on behalf of all Maine Youth Power, we ask that you strongly support *LD 1765 An Act to Ensure Affordability and Stability in Housing for Mobile Home Park Residents*.

Before this legislative session began, we surveyed over 100 young people across Maine to understand their most pressing concerns. Housing ranked as one of the top three. That alone speaks volumes—this bill is not just a housing issue. It's a youth issue.

While we are aware of how many people are impacted from the housing instability. Today, we want to speak from the perspective of Maine's youth—many of whom are silently bearing the weight of the housing crisis. Young people across our state are watching and listening to their families struggle to afford to keep a roof over their heads, and it's shaping their sense of security, their mental health, and their future.

We also want to lift up the voices of youth that come from immigrant and asylum-seeking families. These are families in Maine that have brought incredible resilience, diversity, and economic contributions to our communities—yet are often blamed for the shortage in housing. When in reality they themselves are also victims and face substantial housing barriers including less opportunities of affordable housing and discrimination in the housing market. Forcing these families in unsafe living conditions with health hazards, and overcrowding.

Mobile home parks have historically offered an affordable and stable option for working families, but that stability is ceasing. The overall market rate in the last year in Maine has been rising and it's only getting worse for many. When rents rise suddenly or ownership drastic changes must be made. Parents are working longer hours to make ends meet, leaving less time for their children. Others, must pack up their belongings with no idea where they're going next. Teachers may see in these kids disinterest; what they don't see is the frustration, the anxiety, and the loss of a place once called home. Now these children are trying to do homework in cars, stay focused in classrooms, but it's all so hard when you are growing up in an environment filled with stress and uncertainty.

LD 1765 helps put safeguards in place that can prevent those disruptions. It recognizes the value and investment of stability and affordability not just for today's families, but for the next generation listening and watching closely—hoping for better.

We urge you to support LD 1765 to help make housing stability for mobile home park residents possible in order to ensure a livable future for all Mainers.

Thank you for your time.