

Testimony of the Greater Portland Council of Governments

In Support of LD 2079 – An Act to Amend the Laws Governing Municipal Reporting on Residential Buildings

Dear Members of the Housing and Economic Development Committee:

The Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG) supports LD 2079, the fix bill to LD 1184, and appreciates the Legislature's effort to make targeted, practical adjustments to the municipal housing data reporting requirements. GPCOG is coordinating the statewide housing data collection effort in partnership with the Housing Opportunity Program (HOP), and from an implementation standpoint, this fix bill meaningfully improves clarity, consistency, and feasibility for municipalities.

The changes proposed in LD 2079 are closely aligned with the recommendations that emerged from last year's pilot project and with how this year's data collection is being structured. The bill keeps the request focused on essential information (building permits, certificates of occupancy or final approvals, and demolitions), while aligning building categories with those used by the Census – except for separately identifying accessory dwelling units, which is important given their role under LD 2003. Together, these changes will allow the State to better understand housing production without overcomplicating the reporting process or placing unnecessary burden on municipal staff.

We also support the bill's adjustment to the reporting deadline. Additional flexibility is important, particularly as municipalities adapt to a new annual reporting requirement. This change will help improve data quality while making compliance more manageable for local staff.

Overall, LD 2079 reflects a practical, implementation-focused approach that will result in clearer reporting, more reliable data, and better outcomes for both municipalities and the State. For these reasons, GPCOG supports the bill.