

Donna Chale
Brunswick
LD 2124

Testimony in Support of LD2124: Funding Emergency Shelters with Real Estate
Transfer Tax Revenue

State of Maine - 132nd Legislature

Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development

Testimony of Donna Chale on behalf of Tedford Housing, Brunswick, Maine

Date: February 10, 2026

Support for LD2124: “An Act to Support Emergency Shelter Funding Using Revenue
from the Real Estate Transfer Tax”

Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and members of the Committee on Housing and
Economic Development:

My name is Donna Chale. I am here today to testify both on my own behalf and on
behalf of my community in support of LD2124, “An Act to Support Emergency
Shelter Funding Using Revenue from the Real Estate Transfer Tax.” I am grateful for
the opportunity to speak in favor of this important legislation.

Tedford Housing’s Efforts and Challenges

In Brunswick, Tedford Housing has made significant efforts to build a new shelter
and to expand access to temporary housing for individuals and families who are at
risk of losing permanent housing. The lack of affordable housing in our area,
combined with factors such as job loss, medical debt, unexpected expenses, and
mental and physical health challenges, has contributed to a growing need for
emergency shelter.

Despite our increased capacity, we are unable to meet the rising demand for
emergency shelter. Our dedicated case workers and staff assist those experiencing
homelessness by connecting them with necessary services. Additionally, we operate a
Warming Center during the winter months to offer extra shelter.

We face ongoing difficulties in raising private funds and securing grants to maintain
these facilities and services. The time and energy devoted to fundraising detracts from
our core mission of serving clients. Without a reliable funding source from the state, it
will not be possible to continue this essential work. Providing shelter also helps save
taxpayer dollars by reducing emergency room visits, lowering crime rates, and
decreasing the need for crisis services.

Need for Stable Funding

Currently, temporary funding falls far short of the actual costs involved in sheltering
guests. Only a stable partnership among state, local, and regional stakeholders can
prevent shelter closures and cutbacks in homeless services.

I respectfully ask the committee to vote “Ought to Pass” on LD2124. Stable funding
will allow Maine’s shelters to focus on our mission—helping people transition from
homelessness to home.

Thank you for your consideration.

Donna Chale