

**State of Maine - 132nd Legislature**  
**Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development**  
**Testimony of Andrew Lardie on behalf of Tedford Housing (Brunswick, Maine)**  
 February 10, 2026  
**Supporting LD 2124, "An Act to Support Emergency Shelter Funding Using Revenue from the Real Estate Transfer Tax"**

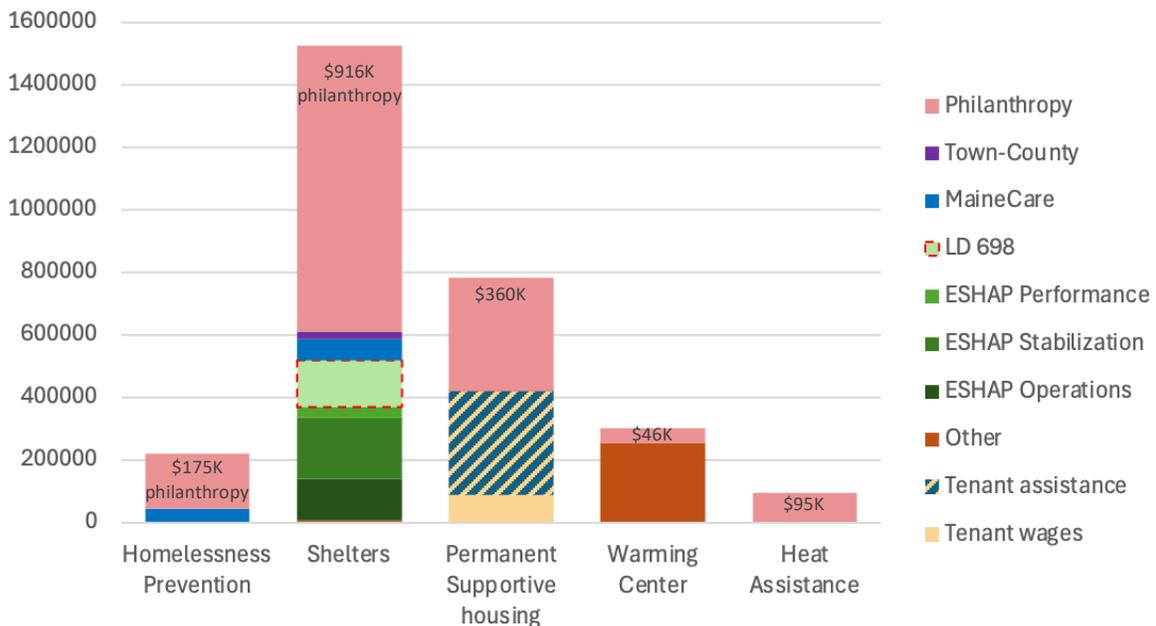
Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and members of the Committee on Housing and Economic Development:

My name is Andrew Lardie, and I am here on behalf of Tedford Housing. Tedford serves a catchment area of 40 towns and 200,000 residents in the southern midcoast through a range of programs to prevent homelessness and mitigate its impact. I appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of LD 2124, An Act to Support Emergency Shelter Funding Using Revenue from the Real Estate Transfer Tax.

Since I testified before you last year, Tedford has completed our emergency shelter expansion. We now serve 60% more people at our two shelters for a total of about 64 people nightly, including 10 families with kids. Additionally, our warming center welcomes 25-30 people nightly, and our other programs serve scores of households monthly who are at risk of homelessness. Tedford is doing everything we can programmatically to increase our level of service amid a deepening homelessness crisis.

Fortunately the Warming Center program has been almost 90% subsidized by a state grant. But on the shelter side, our long term investment comes with significant short-term risk; every new, under-funded bed adds to our fundraising mandate. This year LD698 has made a big difference mitigating that risk, covering 10% of shelter operation costs (see below) and reducing the unfunded share of our shelter program from 70% to 60% (~\$900,000 this year; see below). The fundraising climb is less steep, if still daunting.

**Tedford Housing Programs - Operating Funding Stacks FY26**



While I'm hopeful that Tedford will come close to breaking even this year, it is alarming to contemplate a future in which the core operating subsidy for shelters reverts to \$7.16 against an average bednight cost of over \$100 statewide. We are still years away from the relief promised by the state's investments in additional housing programs, and many of our shelters cannot survive even 2-3 years with a gap this large. LD 2124 adds an essential piece to sustain life-saving programs that serve every community in our state.

Research shows that emergency shelters efficiently reduce the public costs of poverty and homelessness. They reduce crime, emergency room visits, and mortality. When shelters lack adequate funding and people end up outside, outcomes become more tragic and more expensive for everyone - individuals, families, municipalities, hospitals, law enforcement, and schools.

Shelters need predictable, ongoing funding to plan responsibly and maintain the modest 1200 shelter beds that serve Maine's 4400 people currently known to be homeless. The historic pattern of one-time funding patches that arrive after a crisis, has forced many shelters into chronic short-term planning, which is inherently inefficient. Please, vote "ought to pass" on LD 2124 and give Maine's safety net the possibility of operational stability.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Lardie". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of "Andrew" and "Lardie" being capitalized and prominent.

Andrew Lardie

Executive Director

Tedford Housing