



# HOMEWORTHY

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February 7, 2026

To the honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development,

My name is Shannon Shimer and I am writing with ardent support for LD 2124, a bill aimed at extending homeless shelter support funding to shelters in Maine using revenue from the real estate transfer tax. I serve as the Director of Social Services at Homeworthy, a homeless services agency in Knox County that, among other programs, operates Hospitality House, a 22 bed family shelter that provides our neighbors with a safe, warm place to stay. If working in homeless services in midcoast Maine for the past four years has taught me anything, it is that every one of us are vulnerable to a singular catastrophe that could result in losing stable housing. Community members who stay in homeless shelters across our state may have experienced a medical emergency that results in job loss; they may be a single parent who has successfully fled domestic violence without a support system; they may be a family whose parents have finally entered into recovery after years of substance misuse and are working to rebuild their lives. Regardless of the pathway that a person finds their way to a homeless shelter in Maine, our service sector's aim is to provide life-saving shelter and connection to basic needs until more developed, realized life goals can be achieved.

Homeless services agencies across the state are some of the most nimble, creative groups in Maine. We problem solve, collaborate, and advocate on behalf of some of our most vulnerable neighbors. We know how to stretch a dollar. Currently, the average cost of operating a shelter bed in Maine is \$102/night but each bed is only reimbursed by the state at a rate of \$7.16/night. Agencies like Homeworthy are fundraising the additional \$94.84/night on an annual basis because we know that our most vulnerable neighbors deserve to be sheltered. LD 2124 will contribute towards the \$94.84/night that homeless shelters are currently covering. This legislation will provide life-saving funding to support shelters to remain solvent. We saw the closing of York County Shelter Program's shelter in 2025 and without the funding support of LD 2124, it has been noted that Rumford Area Group Homes may have to close this year. I implore you to consider establishing a stable and sustainable funding source for Maine's emergency shelter system. As elected officials, you have a unique opportunity to embody our state motto *Dirigo* (I Lead) in leading the charge to fund Maine's shelters.

Respectfully,

Shannon Shimer, M.Ed.  
Director of Social Services  
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## Family Shelter and Support Services

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## The Landing Place Youth Center

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**Our mission:** Breaking the cycle of poverty and homelessness in Midcoast Maine.

Homeworthy is a 501(c)3 not for profit organization, EIN # 46-3136785 fna Knox County Homeless Coalition