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Maine Community Action Partnership Supports LD 819 An Act To Reduce Lung Cancer Rates in Maine by Requiring Testing for and Mitigation of Radon in Residential Buildings by Landlords

April 8, 2021

Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer, ladies and gentlemen of the Joint Committee on Health and Human Services, I am Megan Hannan, Executive Director of Maine Community Action Partnership, and we support LD 819 An Act To Reduce Lung Cancer Rates in Maine by Requiring Testing for and Mitigation of Radon in Residential Buildings by Landlords.

For more than 50 years, Community Action has served as a dynamic and community-based force in addressing the causes and conditions of poverty throughout Maine and the country. Our ten Community Action Agencies (CAAs) deliver programs and services for people with low- and moderate income, including the Home Energy Assistance Program, or HEAP; workforce development; the current rental relief program; Head Start and more.

Radon is often referred to as the unseen killer – you cannot see, smell or taste it. It is only detectable by testing, and then once found, it needs to be remediated. This bill requires landlords to test residential buildings for radon, and then to act on it.

Too often, owners of affordable, workforce or subsidized housing, where many Community Action customers live, do the minimum upkeep to keep the housing affordable. While we certainly appreciate the cost return on investment element of being a landlord and we appreciate the availability of affordable housing, radon puts people at risk. It can be contained, and it is relatively easy to do.

Our state, especially along the coast, is located on granite, in some places with very little overburden. Radon is common, more than most people know. We have had testing programs and are partnering with Free ME From Lung Cancer to do more.

Cancer is the leading cause of death in Maine, which is not the case in other US states (heart disease is). Lung cancer is the most common form of cancer in Maine and the US. In this case, cancer is largely preventable.

For these reasons, please support LD 819.

I am happy to answer any questions that I can, now or in the work session.

Respectfully Submitted,

[Megan Hannan](#)
Executive Director