

Committee on Housing

Re: **LD 2: An Act to Address Maine's Housing Crisis**

"An Act to End Chronic Homelessness by Creating the Housing First Fund"

To Teresa Pierce, Traci Gere, and committee staff,

My name is Jennifer Crone and I'm a senior attending the University of Maine and pursuing a degree in social work. Housing has become a major issue all over our state with people living in inadequate housing and there's a major homelessness issue. In my social work classes we discuss these issues and how they impact the clients that we work with. In my current field placement for school I see the impacts of the housing crisis almost every day. People all over the state are struggling to find affordable housing that is also livable. This has a major impact on one's mental health and ability to carry on with their everyday lives.

When I was a junior in college I started living in an apartment and paying rent on my own without my parents' help. I quickly started to realize how expensive housing is. While taking classes I'm only able to work part-time and I found that pretty much my entire paycheck went to rent with just some left over to pay for groceries and gas. This didn't really leave me any wiggle room. The past couple years I spent a lot of time stressing about how I'm going to be able to pay rent, work, and do well in school. Not only is rent expensive, but most apartments don't include amenities. I also often worry about being able to rent or even buy a home once I finish school. There also just seems to be a lack of housing options out there that are affordable but also adequate. My entire life I've looked forward to owning my own home and even that basic goal seems unmeetable now. I think that everyone, including all college students that are graduating, worries about how they are going to be able to live given the housing costs. I think something needs to be done in order to reduce the cost of rent, help with homelessness, and solve the housing crisis in Maine.

I think that this act will make a huge difference in our state. I urge you to vote yes on LD 2.

Respectfully,

Jennifer Crone

University of Maine

Bachelors of Social Work Student