



**Alliance for Addiction and Mental Health Services, Maine**  
*The unified voice for Maine's community behavioral health providers*

Malory Otteson Shaughnessy, Executive Director

**Testimony in Support of LD 2**

**“An Act to Address Maine's Housing Crisis”**

**Sponsored by Speaker Rachel Talbot-Ross**

**April 4, 2023**

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Good afternoon Senator Pierce, Representative Gere, and members of the Housing Committee. My name is Malory Shaughnessy and I am the Executive Director of the Alliance for Addiction and Mental Health Services. The Alliance is the statewide association representing the majority of Maine's community based mental health and substance use treatment providers, providing services to over 80,000 Maine men, women, and children. The Alliance advocates for the implementation of sound policies and evidence-based practices that serve to enhance the quality and effectiveness of our behavioral health care system.

On behalf of the Alliance, I am here today to speak in support of LD 2, "An Act to Address Maine's Housing Crisis." Maine desperately needs more supportive housing. This bill offers the state an opportunity to create a dedicated revenue stream to pay for supportive services to help Mainers remain in stable housing in our communities. Supportive housing can help stabilize people with mental health issues and substance use disorders who are experiencing homelessness.

Poverty, unemployment, and lack of affordable housing are commonly recognized causes of homelessness. These risk factors can be exacerbated by personal vulnerabilities such as mental and substance use disorders<sup>1</sup>, trauma and violence<sup>2</sup>, domestic violence<sup>3</sup>, justice-system involvement, sudden serious illness, divorce, death of a partner, and disabilities.

Supportive housing programs can help address the root causes of homelessness through a range of essential recovery support services, including mental and substance use disorder treatment, employment assistance.

Permanent supportive housing offers safe and stable housing environments with voluntary and flexible supports and services to help people manage serious, chronic issues such as mental and substance use disorders.

Large-scale studies demonstrating the benefits include the Collaborative Initiative to End Chronic Homelessness<sup>4</sup> and HUD-VA Supportive Housing Program<sup>5</sup>.

For all these reasons, the Alliance members urge you to vote ought to pass on LD 2. I am happy to answer any questions you may have for me.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.samhsa.gov/disorders>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.samhsa.gov/trauma-violence>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.samhsa.gov/homelessness-programs-resources/hpr-resources/domestic-violence-homelessness>

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/CICH\\_ClientOutcomesReport.pdf](https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/CICH_ClientOutcomesReport.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/publications/HUD-VASH-Exit-Study.html>