



**131st Legislature
Joint Select Committee on Housing**

Testimony of Janice de Lima, Norway Savings Bank on April 11, 2023

in favor of LD654 - Resolve, Directing the Finance Authority of Maine to Establish a Pilot Program to Encourage the Development of Accessory Dwelling Units

Good afternoon, Senator Pierce, Representative Gere, and members of the Joint Select Committee on Housing. My name is Janice de Lima, I am the Community Reinvestment Officer at Norway Savings Bank. Norway is a \$1.7 billion community bank with over 150 years of operation in Maine. We provide financial services to over 40,000 households in western and southern Maine through 24 branches. Norway Savings Bank employs more than 300 people and operates divisions in asset management, business banking and personal banking.

I also serve on the board of directors of the Maine Affordable Housing Coalition, The Genesis Fund, Avesta Housing and was recently appointed to the Maine Redevelopment Land Bank Authority.

Thank you for this opportunity to offer testimony in favor of LD654 a *Resolve, Directing the Finance Authority of Maine to Establish a Pilot Program to Encourage the Development of Accessory Dwelling Units sponsored by Senator Pouliot.*

This resolve directs the Finance Authority of Maine to establish a 2-year pilot program to encourage the development of accessory dwelling units in the State. To my understanding, the program must buy down interest rates to levels below market rates for up to 100 community bank loans for accessory dwelling units on a first-come, first-served basis, until the allocated funding is fully utilized or the program ends. The authority must submit annual reports on the outcomes of this pilot to this committee.

As a community bank, we have an excellent experience with FAME and its staff; we find them responsive and collaborative. If the goal of LD 654 is to put in place a program that expedites the approval of interest rate buy-down to incentivizes more ADU construction, FAME has demonstrated agility and creativity in bringing new programs forward with a thoughtful and sustainable approach. FAME has strong lines of communication with Maine banks and we believe they can get the message out on this program expeditiously and with clarity. While our experience with Maine Housing is also strong, we believe the recent expansion of funds being administered by MSHA and the ensuing pipeline they are managing will dilute the attention this Pilot Program will need to launch and gain momentum.

I am testifying today in favor of LD 654 and urge you to support this resolve. Thank you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Janice de Lima".

Janice de Lima

Vice President, CRA Officer