



131st Legislature
Joint Select Committee on Housing

Testimony the Maine Affordable Housing Coalition
In favor of LD1609 - An Act to Prevent Student Homelessness

Senator Pierce, Representative Gere, and esteemed members of the Joint Select Committee on Housing, We appreciate the chance to present written testimony on behalf of the Maine Affordable Housing Coalition (MAHC). As a nonprofit membership organization representing over 140 Maine development, engineering, design, construction, and housing services organizations, our mission is to advocate for the creation and preservation of affordable housing for all Maine residents. Today, we express our support for Senator Rafferty's LD 1609, An Act to Prevent Student Homelessness.

This vital piece of legislation aims to implement measures to address and reduce the prevalence of homeless students. While we cannot eliminate every obstacle, we do have the capacity to make a meaningful impact by directing resources towards helping families secure stable housing. This approach will not only aid in mitigating homelessness but also enhance the educational success of our students. By investing in these targeted measures, we cultivate an environment in which our young people can flourish and reach their full potential.

The importance of eradicating student homelessness cannot be overstated. Research indicates that homeless students are more likely to experience emotional and physical health issues, struggle academically, and face long-term economic challenges. The passage of LD 1609 represents our commitment to creating a brighter future for our children and addressing these concerns. By prioritizing homelessness prevention and fostering positive educational outcomes, we invest in the welfare and success of future generations, ultimately contributing to a more robust and resilient society.

Additionally, addressing student homelessness will also have a ripple effect on our communities. Providing stable housing for families can lead to increased neighborhood stability, reduced crime rates, and overall economic growth. Moreover, stable housing conditions can alleviate the burden on public resources such as emergency shelters, healthcare services, and the criminal justice system. The enactment of LD 1609 will generate long-lasting benefits that extend beyond the individual students and their families.

In conclusion, I urge you to recognize the enormous potential of LD 1609 and its pivotal role in combating the issue of student homelessness. We have a unique opportunity to make a lasting, positive impact on the lives of numerous students and families by offering the necessary support and resources to secure stable housing. As community leaders, it is our duty to ensure that every child has the opportunity to succeed and thrive.

Thank you for your consideration.