

Jordan Henry
Old Town
LD 1710

Senator Pierce, Representative Geere, and distinguished members of the Special Committee on Housing,

My name is Jordan Henry and I am a resident of Old Town, ME and work at a nearby school as a social worker and I am testifying in favor of LD 1710.

Rental assistance will make it so parents and guardians can buy snacks for their children to take to school. Moreover, it means children will experience a reduction in disruptive behaviors and be more likely to be present and engaged in school. It means being able to afford warm, winter clothes. It means a family can pay to get their car fixed and provide transportation for their child for after school sports and clubs. It means a child on MaineCare receiving outpatient counseling at school is less at risk of relocating thus needing to establish a new therapeutic relationship. A 3rd grader once told me he didn't plan on making friends at his new school because they would just end up moving again.

I know this because I spend dozens of hours every week listening to children, parents and kinship caregivers describe their lives and the many challenges they are up against. Most of the time, these issues overlap with or stem from factors related to unstable housing and the problems it exacerbates.

There is no reason why we should not raise the Real Estate Transfer Tax and fund a voucher program that will uplift the lives of thousands of people— our neighbors, our children's friends at school as well as their teachers, and so many others who we know. I recently purchased a home and know that raising the RETT will not dramatically change the lives of home buyers. It didn't change mine.. However, it will dramatically change the lives of countless others across our state.

Pass the HOME Act and create the change that our housing landscape in Maine so desperately needs.

With Urgency,
Jordan Henry