

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Terry Sutton

President

Chip Leighton

Vice President

Yemaya St. Clair

Secretary

Jennifer Wilson

Treasurer

Joann Bautista

Terry Davies

Lauren Gauthier

John Roberts

Elaine Rosen

Kini Schoop

Maurice A. Selinger III

Jay Tansey

55 Portland Street

Portland, ME 04101

207.775.0026

info@preblestreet.orgUnited Way
of Southern Maine

Dear Senator Pierce, Representative Gere, and Members of the Joint Select Committee on Housing,

My name is Devon Stockmayer, I am the Advocacy Supervisor at Preble Street. I would like to encourage you to support LD 1867: An Act to Establish the Community Housing and Rural Development Authority.

It is no secret that the state of Maine, as a microcosm of the nation, is facing a housing crisis right now. With sky rocketing rental and market prices, wage stagnation, and significant inflation, we face a dual challenge: there is not enough housing to go around, and many people cannot afford the housing that is available. In response to this crisis, LD 1867 will create a fund to establish permanently affordable, public community housing sites across Maine.

In an increasingly expensive and unstable economic climate, the “permanently affordable” nature of community housing in LD 1867 will provide critical security to individuals and families who are constantly teetering on the edge of instability due to factors out of their control. For individuals attempting to exit homelessness, affordable low-income housing opportunities are few and far between in the present market. The concept of mixed-income community-owned housing proposed in this bill offers an option tailored to the needs of each tenant. Individuals and families who are frequently priced out of markets could find a home here.

The concept of mixed income developments proposed in this bill should become a model for new housing throughout the state. Some of the most vibrant aspects of community can be found at the intersection of our differences, and this ought to be reflected in the socioeconomic distribution and physical layout of new developments. Perhaps more importantly, this is a scalable model that can be replicated across the state. Having affordable, accessible housing options throughout Maine—from populous cities to rural towns—is the only way to comprehensively address the growing housing crisis.

Like food access, secure housing is essential to long-term stability. LD 1867 will give low-income people and individuals from all walks of life the opportunity to exist in community together without the constant worry of losing their homes. Beginning with the individual or family and rippling outwards to communities, the state of Maine will be made stronger by this investment in a community housing model.

Sincerely,
Devon Stockmayer

