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Maine Community Action Partnership Supports LD 2169 An Act to Support the Development of Workforce Housing to Promote Economic Development in Maine

February 6, 2024

Senator Pierce, Representative Gere, members of the Committee on Housing, I am Megan Hannan, Executive Director of the Maine Community Action Partnership, the membership organization of the ten community action agencies in Maine, and we support LD 2169 An Act to Support the Development of Workforce Housing to Promote Economic Development in Maine.

Our state's greatest resource is our people, and our state's policies shape people's possibilities. In Community Action, we create conditions that invite children to learn and adults to apply their skills, tapping into the deep-rooted potential in our communities. Through our approach, we build a family's capacity for sustained stability and economic growth. The families we work with through on the job training, furthering education and employment are the families and individuals that need a bill like this.

LD 2169 is targeted at workers, the missing middle in our efforts to develop more affordable housing. These are the folks who are working full-time, even if that means two or more jobs; they earn too much to qualify for many of our State and Federal support programs, but too little to make ends meet easily.

This bill creates a win-win-win. It will be run by the Department of Community and Economic Development – the department that needs more workers to succeed, and workers need them to continue to support the industries in which to work. Community banks – not huge multi-national organizations - will be the lender and the ones who keep this fund going through its low interest – but some interest – to builders and developers. And, of course, the people who can more easily afford the rent or mortgage in the housing market this will create.

Thank you for your time and attention, I am happy to answer your questions if I can.

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