



STATE OF MAINE
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF POLICY INNOVATION AND THE FUTURE
181 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0181

Testimony In Support of

L.D. 2277, Resolve, Authorizing the Commissioner of Administrative and Financial Services to Convey by Sale the Interests of the State in 3 Properties Located in Biddeford, Sanford and York

March 26, 2024

Senator Pierce, Representative Gere, and distinguished members of the Joint Select Committee on Housing, my name is Greg Payne and I serve as the Senior Advisor on Housing Policy in the Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future. I am here today to offer testimony in support of **L.D. 2277, Resolve, Authorizing the Commissioner of Administrative and Financial Services to Convey by Sale the Interests of the State in 3 Properties Located in Biddeford, Sanford and York.**

As the Committee knows very well after all of the hard work you have undertaken during the 131st Legislature, there is a severe undersupply of housing in Maine. That supply problem is particularly acute in York County, leading to unprecedented homelessness and housing insecurity.

The Administration seeks to support local efforts to address this crisis by conveying its interest in three former courthouses located in Biddeford, Sanford and York, as well as the properties on which they are located. Under existing statute, MaineHousing - and local housing authorities as applicable - are given the first option to purchase surplus state property. It is our understanding that each of the three local housing authorities where these properties are located are, indeed, interested in acquiring them. If this bill is enacted and signed into law, we hope that such acquisitions will occur, and that these three properties are put to use in addressing local housing needs in whatever form that the relevant parties find most appropriate. Certainly our office will seek to assist such efforts in whatever way we can.

This proposal also lays out the process by which the properties would be sold if not ultimately conveyed to a housing authority as described above.

There have been few opportunities in recent years to utilize surplus state property in a way that could help to address local housing needs. The fact that these particular properties are located in communities with the means by which to reuse them in such a way is a circumstance that we hope will be taken advantage of.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposal and for your good work in addressing Maine's housing challenges. Please don't hesitate to contact me if I can be of any further assistance.