



## Executive Director



Diane Small

## Board of Commissioners

Kimberly J. LaChance, *Chairperson*  
Michael Jean, *Vice-Chairperson*  
Glenn J. Dowey, *Tenant Representative*  
Rebecca Ames  
Kendra Williams  
George Little  
Lauren LePage

March 25, 2024

131 Maine Legislature-2<sup>nd</sup> Regular Session  
Testimony of  
Diane G. Small  
Executive Director of Sanford Housing Authority  
Before the Joint Committee on Housing

LD2277

“A Resolve Authorizing the Department of Administrative and Financial Services to Convey by Sale the Interests in the State of 3 Properties to Biddeford, Sanford, and York”

Senator Pierce, Representative Gere, and members of the Joint Select Committee on Housing; I am Diane Small, the Executive Director of Sanford Housing Authority, which serves the municipalities of Sanford, Springvale, Acton, Shapleigh, Lebanon, Alfred, Kennebunk, Wells, and North Berwick.

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for the Committee’s considerable amount of work done toward offering solutions to the affordable housing crisis we are in.

As the Executive Director of the Sanford Housing Authority, I am writing to express our strong support for LD2277. This resolve presents a crucial opportunity to address the pressing need for affordable housing in our communities, particularly in Sanford and across the County of York.

The resolve to authorize the Commissioner of Administrative and Financial Services to convey the State's interests in three former courthouses, including one in the City of Sanford, for use as residential housing aligns perfectly with our mission to provide safe, decent, and affordable housing options for low-income, moderate- and middle-income individuals and families.

Repurposing these underutilized courthouses into residential units offers numerous benefits. Firstly, it allows for strategic utilization of valuable real estate assets, ensuring that they contribute meaningfully to the well-being and prosperity of our communities. Secondly, it addresses the critical shortage of affordable housing options, a challenge that many individuals and families in Sanford and beyond currently face. By transforming these properties into residential units, we can provide much-needed housing solutions while revitalizing neighborhoods and fostering community development.

At Sanford Housing we are actively seeking opportunities to develop Senior Housing which would also offer supportive services so that seniors can safely remain in these units through their health span. Currently, we operate 3 developments comprising 173 subsidized units that serve seniors from very low income to 50-60% AMI.



Additionally, we have successfully partnered with the City of Sanford's Land Bank to acquire and rehabilitate blighted single-family homes, subsequently selling them to middle-income workers-such as local firefighters and police officers. The inclusion of the former courthouse in our portfolio would further empower us to leverage resources for senior housing development, as well as facilitate the acquisition, rehabilitation, and sale of homes to middle-income buyers, thereby addressing housing needs across the continuum. Sanford Housing believes in the importance of not just developing new housing but also preserving our current housing stock.

In conclusion, LD2277 represents a significant opportunity to leverage existing resources to meet the growing demand for affordable housing in York County by giving us the tools to leverage resources. Through this testimony, we hope that we have shown our ability to develop properties and operate them effectively. We urge you to support this legislation, as it aligns with our shared goal of creating vibrant, inclusive communities where all individuals have access to safe and affordable housing options.

Thank you for considering our perspective on this critical issue.

Sincerely,

*Diane Small*

Diane G. Small  
Executive Director  
Sanford Housing Authority  
[dsmall@sanfordhousing.org](mailto:dsmall@sanfordhousing.org)

