

**Testimony of Tanya Emery, Director of Community and Economic Development
for the City of Bangor
before the
Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business**

Regarding LD 1694, An Act to Create the Maine Redevelopment Land Bank Authority

March 3, 2022

Senator Curry, Representative Roberts, and members of the Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business, my name is Tanya Emery and I am the Director of Economic and Community Development for the City of Bangor. I am testifying today in support of LD 1694.

The City of Bangor has been working tirelessly since 2013 under our own vacant and abandoned property ordinance to facilitate redevelopment of blighted, abandoned, and hazardous properties. These projects are typically difficult, expensive, and time-consuming due to the legal and financial uncertainties that often plague these properties. Our current placard list has properties that have been in that condition for more than a decade, meaning more than 10 years' worth of further deterioration is bringing down neighborhoods, property values, and community spirit. We also have 92 registered vacant or abandoned properties, however due to the fact that the taxes are still being paid, many by out-of-state mortgage servicing companies, we have limited options. LD 1694 would be a step in the right direction, giving us access to tools to get these buildings redeveloped to ease our housing crisis.

This is an important bill, and can help to address several major issues facing communities across Maine – housing affordability, economic development, resiliency, and climate change – after all, the greenest buildings are the ones that are already built.

The City of Bangor is proud to support LD 1694 and urges you to do the same. Thank you for your time and attention.

For additional information, please feel free to contact any of the following municipal officials:

Debbie Laurie, City Manager	debbie.laurie@bangormaine.gov	992-4253
Courtney O'Donnell, Asst. City Manager	Courtney.odonnell@bangormaine.gov	992-4202
Tanya Emery, Community/Econ. Dev.	tanya.emery@bangormaine.gov	992-4236

Tanya Emery
Bangor
LD 1694

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