

Sanford Housing Authority

Commissioners:

Chairperson, Kimberly J. LaChance
Glenn J. Dowe
Michael Jean
Pamela Buck
Rebecca Ames
George Little
Arlene Townsend

Executive Director

Diane Gerry



Dear Committee Members,

I would like to submit written testimony in support of LD 1694. I am the Executive Director of Sanford Housing Authority and a resident of Sanford, Maine. I currently attend all City of Sanford Landbank meetings as an ex-officio member.

I have had the opportunity to work directly with the Sanford Landbank Committee in purchasing a property and revitalizing the property into a new 3-bedroom home that we will sell at an affordable price. We will use the NSP (National Stabilization Program) model for the sale to ensure that a median income family can purchase this property. Working along with the Landbank and the private sector has been an incredible experience and opportunity. The increased network of contractors and vendors for Sanford Housing has been beneficial as well as the opportunity to put blighted homes, that house no one, back on the market is an incredible asset for our community. This program has helped us improve the housing stock which is part of the mission of the Sanford Housing Authority, providing safe, affordable and attractive housing to the people we serve.

Sanford Housing is working with local government to address people experiencing homelessness in our community. Being able to acquire property at a cost that is reasonable and to be able to then get more units to lease people up is an incredible feat during not only a pandemic but also a housing shortage. Without the constant communication and cooperation between the Housing Authority and the City, through the Landbank, this would not be happening.

Because the Landbank Committee includes representation from the housing authority, local government, private sector, and community members, it offers a diverse perspective and ensures all citizens are afforded equal opportunities.

Sanford Housing Authority view the Sanford Landbank as another “tool in the toolbox” to assist people in finding safe and affordable housing. I believe a State Landbank would benefit all of us in the same ways.

Based on my working experience and knowledge of our local landbank, I can only assume a State-wide landbank would offer a similar approach. Having a collaborative relationship similar to what has been working in Sanford would benefit all sectors of people living in the State of Maine. I fully support LD1694.

Diane G. Gerry
Executive Director
Sanford Housing Authority



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Sanford

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