



Dear Senator Curry, Representative Roberts, and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement, and Business:

My name is Mandy Reynolds and I welcome the opportunity to speak in support of LD 1694 - An Act To Create the Maine Redevelopment Land Bank Authority. I am the Executive Director of Build Maine, a co-founder of Union + Co coworking and private office space, and REALTOR Associate Broker focused on commercial and residential with Keller Williams Realty.

The Maine Redevelopment Land Bank Authority is a once in a generation opportunity to reset the course of Maine's future, making it possible to bring vacant, abandoned, and tax delinquent properties back into productive reuse across the state.

This bill is particularly important for our rural communities that have neither the time nor resources to address, for instance, the environmental hazards of an abandoned school or a delinquent and dilapidated factory building from industry long since gone. Nor do our rural places attract private or speculative development on their own, due to market forces often beyond their control. I'm sure you can think of a property (or several) in your own community that has lingered and deteriorated past the point of reuse. This bill aims to address properties before they get to this point or provide solutions for municipalities when a building is past the point of no return.

From a financial perspective, the Maine Redevelopment Land Bank Authority would allow for increased access to large pots of Federal funds that we simply cannot obtain without a Land Bank Authority. While Federal monies can wax and wane, the Maine Redevelopment Land Bank Authority would pay for itself through an increased fee on construction and demolition debris. Ultimately, the bill is paid for by the industry that benefits from it.

But the benefits are not just for developers. Every Mainer has a stake in this bill, as it is a measure to combat climate change. We are taught to reduce, reuse, and recycle in our daily lives, concerning ourselves with computer paper, plastic bottles, and aluminum cans. However, we ignore the massive amount of construction-related materials generated from demolishing buildings. *40% of the waste sent to landfills in our country is construction and demolition debris.* Additionally, as discussed by Kathryn Rogers Merlino in her book [Building Reuse](#), buildings are a source of stored or "sunk" carbon. The materials in an existing building represent natural resources. Often, buildings are demolished in the name of energy efficiency. However, it would take a modern energy efficient (e.g. LEED Certified) building approximately 80 years to recoup the energy savings compared with reusing an existing building.

The Maine Redevelopment Land Bank Authority would provide tools in the toolbox of municipalities, regional authorities, and the State to ready buildings for productive reuse. Please consider supporting this important bill that will change Maine's future.

Sincerely,
Mandy Reynolds

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