



February 24, 2025

Dear Members of the Judiciary Committee of the 132nd Legislature:

The Central Maine Apartment Owners Association (CMAOA) is a non-profit trade association representing private rental property owners in Central Maine. With **over 600** active members, CMAOA is one of the largest organized rental associations in Maine. Our members own or manage more than **4,000** residential rental units in Central Maine alone. We provide discounted services, education, advocacy and an active lobbying effort for our members. Our core purpose is to educate and address issues facing the apartments owners and managers of the Central Maine area, including informing and advocating for CMAOA Members and educating the public regarding the interests of rental property owners and managers. Additionally, we coordinate education and resources with our lobbyist Daniel J. Bernier and the other landlord groups across Maine including: Maine Apartment Owners and Managers Association (MAOMA), Rental Housing Alliance of Maine (RHAM), Greater Bangor Area Landlord and Owners Association (GBAOMA), Capital Area Housing Association (CAHA), and Lewiston Auburn Landlord Association(LALA). **Our mission is to encourage and support those providing safe and quality rental housing in Maine by promoting positive relationships between landlords and renters.**

We are writing in Testimony in Opposition to LD 521: An Act to Prohibit Discrimination in Housing Based on Source of Income, Veteran Status or Military Status

We oppose this bill because we don't hear landlords discriminating based on military status. Is there a problem with landlords discriminating based on someone's military status? Oppositely, in a poll of our owners' association members, we consistently heard how military employment, either current or previous, is a positive factor in determining a tenant's ability to pay, communicate well, care for their unit, and be an overall excellent addition to a rental complex.

It is already unlawful to discriminate against any person because of receipt of public assistance. <https://www.maine.gov/mhrc/laws-guidance/housing> There is already clear laws

and civil process for disputes and filing human rights violation reports. It is not, however, lawful to force a private owner to enter a contract with any party, especially on another party's terms. This has been tried and won again on appeal in Maine Supreme Court. **Original suit:** <https://caselaw.findlaw.com/me-supreme-judicial-court/1655651.html> **Appeal findings:** <https://www.mainerlawreview.org/volume-67-no-1-2015/dussault-v-rre-coach-lantern-holdings-llc/>

CMAOA would be pleased to work with and/or host any legislator, individual, or advocacy group that felt an educational event on issues affecting rental housing in our State. More regulation is an extreme step that should be wielded only after all other avenues have been exhausted. How can we help? Please let us know! **PLEASE OPPOSE LD 521.**

Respectfully,

CMAOA Board of Directors
cmaoasecretary@gmail.com