

Testimony in Support of LD 2176

An Act to Safeguard Personal Information and Strengthen Tenant Rights in Maine

Sponsor: Senator Duson

Public Hearing: Judiciary Committee, March 11, 1:00 PM

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and distinguished members of the Committee:

My name is Ruben Torres, and I serve as the Advocacy and Policy Manager for the Maine Immigrants' Rights Coalition (MIRC). MIRC is a statewide coalition of more than 100 organizations, including immigrant-led groups, service providers, and community organizations working to improve the economic and social standing of Maine's immigrant communities. We are here to testify in support of LD 2176 as amended.

Landlords routinely receive sensitive information from tenants as part of the rental process, such as names, contact information, financial records, identification numbers, and other personal details necessary to verify identity, process rent, and maintain a tenancy. Tenants provide this information because it is required to secure housing and because they reasonably expect that it will be handled with care and used only for legitimate purposes related to that tenancy.

LD 2176 establishes an important and common-sense safeguard, prohibiting the disclosure of a tenant's personal information when done with the intent to harass, intimidate, or pressure someone to vacate a rental property. At the same time, the bill preserves appropriate exceptions by allowing disclosure when required by a judicial warrant or when exigent circumstances exist. In doing so, the legislation protects tenant privacy while ensuring that lawful processes remain fully available.

The bill also provides measured enforcement mechanisms. It allows tenants harmed by an improper disclosure to seek damages and injunctive relief. The legislation does not interfere with routine property management, lawful information sharing, or legitimate legal obligations. Instead, it establishes a baseline expectation that personal information obtained through the housing relationship should not be misused to pressure or harm tenants. In addition, the amendment clarifies that a tenant who brings a good-faith claim regarding the disclosure of private information is protected from retaliatory eviction. This aligns the bill with existing retaliation protections already recognized in Maine law and ensures that individuals can assert their rights without fear of losing their housing.

At its core, LD 2176 reinforces a simple principle: information shared in the course of securing and maintaining housing should be treated responsibly. Housing is one of the most essential relationships in everyday life, and maintaining trust in that relationship benefits both tenants and responsible property owners across the state.

For these reasons, MIRC respectfully urges the Committee to support LD 2176 as amended. Thank you for your time and consideration.