Mayor Rollins, Augusta
Mayor Casavant, Biddeford
Mayor Cayer, Lewiston
Mayor Snyder, Portland
Mayor Glaser, Rockland

Mayor Doyle, Saco
Mayor Mastraccio, Sanford
Mayor Pride, South Portland
Mayor Foley, Westbrook

Testimony in Support of

**LD 211, An Act To Support Emergency Shelter Access For
Persons Experiencing Homelessness**

Presented by Kimberly Cook
February 17, 2021

The Mayors' Coalition is a nonpartisan group formed in 2012, and currently includes the Mayors of nine Maine communities - Augusta, Biddeford, Lewiston, Portland, Rockland, Saco, Sanford, South Portland, and Westbrook – with a combined population of nearly 250,000. The Coalition advocates for state and federal policies that recognize the important role that Maine cities play in providing vital services to Maine people across our state, and the positive impact Maine cities have on the economic strength of our state. The Coalition seeks to work in partnership with Maine's state and federal elected officials to meet the needs of Maine people.

Our communities, like so many communities in Maine and across the country, were struggling to meet the need for affordable housing and emergency shelter before the pandemic, and the situation has only grown more dire over the past year. The Mayors' Coalition has made addressing housing and homelessness one of its top priorities this year. We thank Representative Cloutier for sponsoring this bill, as well as a separate bond measure, to address this urgent need.

This legislation, together with a number of other bills focused on housing and homelessness this session, will go a long way toward addressing this crisis. Providing additional resources to fund both shelter operations and housing stabilization services is much needed as is funding for additional low-barrier shelter services. We urge this Committee to work to address affordable housing and emergency shelter in both rural and urban areas all across the state.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.