

Safiya Khalid

Lewiston, Maine

February 17th, 2021

Proponent of LD 211: An Act To Support Emergency Shelter Access for Persons Experiencing Homelessness

Senator Rafferty, Representative Sylvester and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing, my name is Safiya Khalid, and I am constituent of the bill sponsor but also an advocate for homelessness, low-income folks, and so many more who are marginalized.

As a Lewiston city councilor, I have also been trying to advocate for solutions to homelessness at the municipal level. Homelessness continues to be a national issue for a long time but in the time of a pandemic, this has worsened the living and health conditions of our most vulnerable community members.

For too long, states have left the homelessness disparities to the municipal level and it is long overdue that there needs to be action taken at the state level, especially when it comes to funding.

Here in Lewiston, I am currently the council representative to the housing committee and homelessness is the first issue we have taken. We need a resource center where we can support folks with case management, mental health services and another rapid round services.

I am in support of LD 211 because Emergency Shelters provide the most basic services that we take for granted such as providing case management, professional support in finding homes, jobs, and so much more. While Emergency Shelter is not a permanent solution, it is something that many people in our communities will benefit from temporary. As a state, as a committee, and as leaders of your own communities, I hope you can all fight hard to support and advocate for affordable housing and better solutions to homelessness.

Thank you for your time,

Safiya Khalid