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**Testimony of Representative Mark John Blier in support of
LD 1322, “Resolve, Directing the Maine State Housing Authority To Allow Rental Housing
Owners To Apply for Emergency Relief Assistance”
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing**

Good morning, Senator Hickman, Representative Sylvester and esteemed colleagues of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing. I am Representative Mark Blier and I represent the people of District 22, which includes Limington and parts of Standish, Buxton and Limerick. I appear before you today in support LD 1322, “RESOLVE, Directing the Maine State Housing Authority To Allow rental Housing Owners To Apply for Emergency Rental Relief Assistance.”

It has been a tough year. We all know how COVID-19 has effected each and every one of us.

Businesses have been hurt. Some have shut down. Thankfully, help such as the forgivable PPP Loan Program have allowed some businesses make it through the pandemic.

I would like to give credit for everything that the Maine State Housing Authority has done through organizations like York County Community Action Corporation who provided financial help to keep families in their homes.

However, we cannot close our eyes to some landlords. Due to a state moratorium on evictions, some landlords face situations where, despite the availability of financial assistance, some families choose to not apply for aid.

This creates a hardship on landlords who are now struggling to pay their mortgage and are at risk of losing everything they have worked for their entire lives.

This bill would provide some financial relief to those landlords and enable them to pay their mortgage when tenants choose not to apply for the aid that is available to them.

Providing assistance to landlords who are struggling to pay their mortgage due to a lack of rent payments will help those landlords pay their mortgage and consequently help families stay in their homes.

On behalf of those families, I would like to ask for your support and pass this bill – “ought to pass.”

I thank you for your time and consideration, I would be happy to answer any questions.

District 22 Limington, Standish (part), Buxton (part) & Limerick (part)