

4/26/2021



**Testimony in Opposition**  
**LD 1397, An Act Directing the Maine State Housing Authority to Create a Commission to Develop a Comprehensive Rental Registry for Multifamily Housing**

Chairman Hickman, Chairman Sylvester, and members of the Labor and Housing Committee;

My name is Elizabeth Frazier and I am an attorney at Pierce Atwood. The purpose of this testimony is to express the Maine Real Estate and Development Association's (MEREDA's) opposition to LD 1397, An Act Directing the Maine State Housing Authority (MSHA) to Create a Commission to Develop a Comprehensive Rental Registry for Multifamily Housing.

MEREDA is a statewide, membership-based organization founded in 1985, whose members include real estate owners, for profit and nonprofit developers, architects, engineers, bankers, property managers and other related professionals. The mission of MEREDA is to support responsible development and real estate ownership throughout Maine. Through the work of its Public Policy Committee, MEREDA pursues a more fair, predictable and practical policy environment. MEREDA is the state's only trade association supporting responsible commercial real estate development and the positive economic development that accompanies it.

MEREDA fully supports efforts to encourage affordable housing development and creation in Maine. We value the efforts being done in Augusta to understand the depth and complexity of the issue, and we offer our on-the-ground expertise in your policymaking, to the extent it may be helpful. In this case, it is that on-the-ground expertise that informs our opposition to the development of a statewide registry at this time. Simply put, we believe the development of a statewide rental registry is not the right approach to solving the immediate issue of rental housing affordability in Maine.

We are concerned that the development of this registry would be time-consuming and expensive, and might not achieve the underlying goals. We believe the resources devoted to the development of a registry would be better put toward other initiatives aimed at resolving the underlying issue of addressing homelessness and affordable housing. We know, for example, that the Maine State Housing Authority (MSHA) is doing a national leader in the development of affordable housing policies and programs. We also know that MSHA does not have unlimited resources, and we are concerned that the development of a statewide rental registry will distract from MSHA's other important initiatives.

We appreciate the intent of this bill – to help Maine people get into convenient, efficient, and affordable housing. We do not believe LD 1397 represents the best approach to solving the current problems around rental placement, but we support other efforts to review the State's housing and land use policies, and welcome the opportunity to continue to be a part of the conversation.

Thank you for your consideration of these important issues facing Mainers.

Elizabeth M. Frazier  
On behalf of the Maine Real Estate & Development Association (MEREDA)  
[efrazier@pierceatwood.com](mailto:efrazier@pierceatwood.com)  
207-838-2257