

Justin Giroux  
Fairfield

Dear Labor and Housing Committee,

I'm a property manager of long-term rental housing units in Central Maine. I'm writing in support of LD 1312. This act will help make more dwelling units available in our state. We desperately need creative solutions such as this to increase the number of rental units in our state. As a property manager, I hear from people frequently about how desperate they are to find a place to live. Increasing the supply of housing due to this bill will greatly increase access and perhaps help with the affordability of housing.

ADU's are used in many metropolitan areas successfully. Many local governments are highly biased towards favoring owner occupied housing. We need to have the ability to increase rental housing density to accommodate the housing needs of our population.

Apartment owners are increasingly challenged to source and provide additional housing in the current economic climate. Soaring housing prices prevent profitable returns on purchases of both turnkey and rehab properties which is a barrier to new acquisition. In my own business we have not purchased additional units due to these soaring costs in the past year. With soaring lumber and other raw material prices, new builds are unrealistic as well. Retrofitting existing properties is the most accessible solution for real estate owners in the current economic climate.

Our business focuses on repairing older housing stock and there have been several instances when we wanted to acquire a new property and increase the number of housing units, but always find local government resistant to it. For example, there are many homes currently zoned single family, but were originally duplexes. Getting them back to duplex status can be difficult. Another example is a huge single-family home that would be too large for a rental but would make a good multi-family. The code requirements to get approval for this change are onerous.

This bill will move the needle in the right direction to solve our housing crisis.

Regards,  
Justin Giroux  
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