

Daniel Black
LB Development Partners
LD 2003

Senator Daughtry, Representative Sylvester, and members of the Labor and Housing Committee,

My name is Dan Black, and I'm a Portland-native that works as an affordable housing development consultant. My company, LB Development Partners, consults with nonprofits around the state to finance, design, build and rehab safe, eco-friendly, and affordable housing for Maine residents.

As a Portland resident, I support LD 2003—An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Commission to Increase Housing Opportunities in Maine by Studying Zoning and Land Use Restrictions—because I've seen my friends and neighbors struggling to remain in the community. Over the past decade, real estate prices in the City have skyrocketed as more residents move to town, pricing out people who have been here for decades. The City of Portland, along with some other municipalities across the state, has been proactive in trying to address the affordable housing crisis, but the effects of this crisis do not end at one municipality's boundaries. Therefore, it will take statewide action to ensure that all municipalities are doing their fair share.

As an affordable housing development consultant, I support LD 2003 because I know that, if my colleagues and I in the affordable housing field worked nonstop for the next 20 years, we would only begin to address the scope of the current crisis. There is not the development capacity or funding at the local, state or federal level to build the amount of subsidized affordable housing necessary in our communities. Therefore, our State needs to act to reduce unnecessary restrictions on development in specific cases where those restrictions are preventing non-subsidized affordable housing from being built.

I'm particularly excited about LD 2003 because the proposed legislation will allow for more small-scale affordable housing developments across the state. Small-scale developments—4-12 units per project—will create more affordable housing both in high opportunity areas, where large undeveloped sites do not exist, and in rural areas of the state that lack the density for bigger projects. Designing to fit specific community contexts is an important element of making affordable housing residents feel at home and welcomed into their new neighborhoods.

I hope you will support LD 2003 as currently written.

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