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I would like to comment on how misguided this legislation is and the impact it will have on small towns across Maine.

First, I was appalled at the self-interest that was displayed at the committee hearings this summer and fall. The A.F. housing developers were totally self-serving, seeking financial gain at the detriment of Maine citizens. Our State was founded on the principle of strong local governance. Who knows the needs of their own citizens better than their own local representatives, not a distant State bureaucrat threatening lawsuits. The pending financial and social burden to our small communities will be significant with limited means of fulfilling the demands be it healthcare, schools, policing, etc. With the threat of the mandates and lawsuits from the State agencies the municipalities will not have the financial resources to insure self-governance. The viability of our smaller towns will be lost.

Suggestions:

If enacted, have it only apply to cities and towns with a population exceeding 25,000 within their city limits. These larger towns more likely have the infrastructure in place to absorb significant increases in budgets to support greater demands to subsidized social welfare, hospitalization, schools and municipal services.

I challenge you as committee members to talk to your local citizens and ask them if they support the State threatening lawsuits to override local control of their single family neighborhoods.

Looking at the Maine communities represented by this committee, I am certain if the local citizens were aware of this pending legislation the response would be "Hell No"! In my view simply assess who is promoting this legislation. Do they truly represent the best interest of your local constituents.

Last I am absolutely not opposed to "Affordable Housing". I grew up in a small rural Maine town. This legislation is driven by self-serving lobbyists and developers and certainly not in the best interest of small Maine communities.

Please reflect on the negative impacts to our Maine communities and Vote No!

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