



**OFFICE of the CITY MANAGER**

Marc Meyers  
City Manager  
mmeyers@cityofbath.com

**Written testimony regarding LD 2003, An Act To Implement the Recommendations of the Commission to Increase Housing Opportunities in Maine by Studying Zoning and Land Use Restrictions March 7, 2022**

Senator Daughtry, Representative Sylvester, and members of the Labor and Housing Committee, my name is Marc Meyers and I am City Manager for the City of Bath, located in Sagadahoc County. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony for your consideration.

I applaud the efforts of the Commission to Increase Housing Opportunities in Maine by Study Zoning and Land Use Restrictions to respond swiftly to the state's housing crisis and provide recommendations. As it is written, I cannot 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." I have two concerns for Bath: local control and the City's infrastructure and services.

The City, collaborating with Bath Housing and community partners, have been engaged in conversations to find solutions for the lack of available housing in Bath, including solutions outlined by the commission. This past Wednesday, the City Council formally approved an ordinance allowing accessory dwelling units and we're excited about the opportunities this action will provide for developing new housing units. During development of this ordinance, through committees, Planning Board and City Council, the community worked to determine what works best for Bath and took steps forward.

This legislation limits each individual municipality's ability to have find local solutions by restricting land use and zoning when it comes to housing development. LD 2003 mandates that municipalities create a Priority Development Zone and defines the density requirement within that zone. Bath and its partners are already discussing density and preparing to review exist land use code and zoning regulations about the possibility of being more flexible for housing development. Let the communities take the recommendations, have policy conversations about what works best for each community and how to advance these recommendations.

When any new policy or development is proposed in the City, questions are raised for me – Can the sewer and stormwater infrastructure handle it? Do we have adequate fire and police services to protect it? Do we have the road, pedestrian and public transportation facilities to support it? I need to be able to answer these questions and this legislation does not acknowledge the big picture of municipal operations in support of housing development. I appreciate funding opportunities through Department of Economic and Community Department contained within this legislation, but Bath is facing significant challenges regarding its aging infrastructure and it would be beneficial for other state resources to be coordinated with this effort.

Thanks again for the opportunity to provide this testimony when considering this bill.