

Testimony in opposition to

L.D. 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

Sen. Daughtry, Rep. Sylvester, and members of the Labor and Housing Committee:

The premise of LD 2003 sounds well-intentioned, but as legislators, you know, the devil is always in the details. After all, who does not support affordable housing, property rights and free market, bi-partisan solutions? And who likes being told what they can and can't do on their own property?

In Maine, I have lived through several boom and bust cycles and, based on that experience, I believe the current shortage in supply is temporary. We all know of terrified people "from away" who moved to Maine to ride out the pandemic. While some of these folks may stay permanently; and I hope they do, some are already making plans to move back to their home states. Furthermore, young people are now facing the harsh realities of soaring inflation and high energy costs; some are moving back home with parents to save money. And when the Federal Reserve raises interest rates, the market will dampen. These are just a few examples of factors that will affect housing; the market will adjust to supply and demand, as it has for decades.

If we transition to a system that does not allow local control and promotes largely unfettered statewide growth, we may anticipate bubbles, and **bubbles are known to burst.**

LOCAL land use regulation has existed for hundreds of years because it works; it reflects the values of the LOCAL community. What works in Brunswick may not work in Glenburn or in Scarborough.

Understandably, many people may prefer to live near their jobs; the housing market is always tighter in "hot" towns, but this type of legislation is not the answer. **Local control should not be replaced with this plethora of broad statutes that are enforced with a politically appointed "Review Board" with the power to negate Home Rule.**

As home owners and renters are squeezed by staggering heating fuel prices and electricity bills; **pushing more growth into a struggling community against their will can strain an already stressed community.** There are already supply chain shortages in local stores; a large influx of children can strain local schools; our public safety system is short on staff as is our healthcare system; and our electric grid is barely keeping pace.

For these reasons, **I urge this committee to oppose LD 2003 and any other bills with similar language and intent.**

Respectfully submitted,

Heather Sirocki, Scarborough

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LD 2003

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