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Representative Laura Supica in support of
LD 2003, An Act To Implement the Recommendations of the Commission To Increase Housing Opportunities in Maine by Studying Zoning and Land Use Restrictions
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing

Sen. Daughtry, Rep. Sylvester and esteemed members of the Committee on Labor and Housing, I am Representative Laura Supica and I am honored to represent part of Bangor here in the Maine Legislature. Today, I speak in strong support of **LD 2003, An Act To Implement the Recommendations of the Commission To Increase Housing Opportunities in Maine by Studying Zoning and Land Use Restrictions.**

Like other communities across the state, the housing crisis in Bangor has reached a critical tipping point. Since being sworn into office, I have heard from countless constituents who are struggling to find housing. These folks end up in a cycle of reliance on local services, one that is nearly impossible to escape. This committee knows the story all too well: without reliable housing, Mainers end up bouncing between shelters or friends couches, making it difficult to be in consistent proximity to work, obtain child care or even prepare food.

One constituent in particular has been staying at the Ramada Inn in Bangor for months. She and her husband receive social security and disability benefits. They have steady and reliable income from these sources and have been looking for work to help supplement what they can. Even with this reliable income, there are simply no available and affordable housing options in the Bangor area. Through MaineHousing, they have received assistance in paying for their time at the Ramada Inn, but all of the money that has gone towards keeping a roof over their heads does little good in terms of truly helping them get on their feet and becoming independent – something they desperately want and deserve.

The housing crunch we're seeing in Maine and across the nation is a symptom of generations of inequality and the continuation of this crunch will only perpetuate those inequities. LD 2003 presents us with an opportunity to break that cycle and empowers Mainers and municipalities to create the kinds of communities that we all want to live in, where folks can make a home for themselves and their families.

LD 2003 would flood municipalities with tax incentives and grant awards to address the urgent need for more housing. After the past two years, I know that here in Bangor, we are more motivated than ever to take a serious look at how we structure our communities and our housing

opportunities. City officials and service providers have been under immense strain, doing all they can to help folks who are in desperate need of housing. It has been an incredibly disheartening uphill battle.

I am deeply grateful to Speaker Fecteau for his work on this bill which provides a real opportunity to make a difference in the lives of Mainers in Bangor and across the state. I urge you to support this measure.