



# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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*Testimony of Rep. Poppy Arford in support of*  
**LD 731, An Act to Prohibit Municipalities from Barring the Creation of  
Homeless Shelters**  
*Before the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government*

Senator Baldacci, Representative Salisbury, and distinguished members of the State and Local Government Committee, my name is Poppy Arford. I proudly represent State House District 101, encompassing businesses areas, residential neighborhoods, farmland, coastal and river waters of Brunswick.

I offer this testimony in strong support of **LD 731, An Act to Prohibit Municipalities from Barring the Creation of Homeless Shelters**. This bill ensures that municipalities cannot enact or enforce ordinances that prohibit the establishment or operation of homeless shelters.

I have reviewed the testimony online and am aware that others have addressed the emergency shelter experience in my District and the Brunswick community, as well as the need for emergency shelters in communities statewide. I will add that, although Brunswick hosts Tedford Housing's 24-bed adult shelter and 6-unit family shelter, our new Warming Center saw an average of 35 people on the coldest nights of the winter we are now passing out of. There is clearly not enough emergency housing in Brunswick nor in the surrounding communities, as evidenced by the Warming Shelter guest count.

I want to emphasize the critical importance of this bill in advancing a statewide policy of housing diversity—a policy that embraces a full range of housing options, from upscale residences to emergency housing for individuals experiencing homelessness in Maine.

If enacted and implemented, this bill would align with and strengthen other statewide housing policies, including Housing First initiatives, subsidized housing programs, eviction prevention efforts, and first-time homebuyer assistance. These policies work together to ensure that all Mainers have access to stable and secure housing.

I support the testimony of Representative Lookner, the bill's sponsor, and appreciate your commitment to addressing this critical issue of adequate emergency housing throughout the towns of Maine.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my testimony. A vote to pass LD 731 is appreciated.