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Date: (Filing No. H- )

**HOUSING**

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**STATE OF MAINE  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
131ST LEGISLATURE  
SECOND REGULAR SESSION**

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT “ ” to H.P. 1099, L.D. 1710, “An Act to Establish the Maine Rental Assistance and Guarantee Program and Amend the Laws Regarding Tenants and the Municipal General Assistance Program”

Amend the bill by striking out the title and substituting the following:

**'Resolve, to Establish the Commission to Improve Tenant-Landlord Relationships and Maximize the Use of Housing Vouchers'**

Amend the bill by striking out everything after the title and inserting the following:

**'Sec. 1. Commission established. Resolved:** That the Commission to Improve Tenant-Landlord Relationships and Maximize the Use of Housing Vouchers, referred to in this resolve as "the commission," is established. For the purposes of this resolve, "housing voucher" means a tenant-based housing choice voucher issued under the United States Housing Act of 1937, Public Law 75-412, 50 Stat. 888, Section 8, as amended.

**Sec. 2. Commission membership. Resolved:** That, notwithstanding Joint Rule 353, the commission consists of 14 members appointed as follows:

- 1. Two members of the Senate, appointed by the President of the Senate, including at least one member of the party holding the largest number of seats in the Legislature and at least one member of the party holding the 2nd largest number of seats in the Legislature;
- 2. One member representing an organization that advocates for justice issues, including issues related to housing discrimination in the State, appointed by the President of the Senate;
- 3. One member representing an organization that represents the interests of landlords in the State, appointed by the President of the Senate;
- 4. One member with experience assisting individuals with accessing rental assistance, including individuals receiving shelter or transitional housing services, appointed by the President of the Senate;

**COMMITTEE AMENDMENT**

1           5. Three members of the House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of the  
2 House, including at least one member of the party holding the largest number of seats in  
3 the Legislature and at least one member of the party holding the 2nd largest number of seats  
4 in the Legislature;

5           6. One member with expertise in legal issues affecting tenants with low incomes,  
6 appointed by the Speaker of the House;

7           7. One member who is a landlord who enters into leases with tenants who rely on  
8 rental assistance, such as housing vouchers and municipal general assistance, appointed by  
9 the Speaker of the House;

10          8. Two members who are renters with experience using housing vouchers or other  
11 rental assistance programs, including municipal general assistance, appointed by the  
12 Speaker of the House;

13          9. One member who resides in income-restricted housing in the State, appointed by  
14 the Speaker of the House; and

15          10. One member representing an organization that provides housing navigation  
16 services to renters using a rental assistance program, such as housing vouchers or municipal  
17 general assistance, to secure housing in the State, appointed by the Speaker of the House.

18          The executive director of the Maine Human Rights Commission and the director of the  
19 Maine State Housing Authority, or their designees, serve as nonvoting members of the  
20 commission.

21          **Sec. 3. Chairs. Resolved:** That the first-named Senate member is the Senate chair  
22 and the first-named House of Representatives member is the House chair of the  
23 commission.

24          **Sec. 4. Appointments; convening of commission. Resolved:** That all  
25 appointments must be made no later than 30 days following the effective date of this  
26 resolve. The appointing authorities shall notify the Executive Director of the Legislative  
27 Council once all appointments have been completed. After appointment of all members,  
28 the chairs shall call and convene the first meeting of the commission. If 30 days or more  
29 after the effective date of this resolve a majority of but not all appointments have been  
30 made, the chairs may request authority and the Legislative Council may grant authority for  
31 the commission to meet and conduct its business.

32          **Sec. 5. Duties. Resolved:** That the commission shall:

33           1. Consider the extent to which recipients of housing vouchers are subject to  
34 discrimination based on the fact they are recipients of housing assistance and the adequacy  
35 of current law to deter or prevent discrimination against renters who use income-based  
36 assistance programs, including, but not limited to, housing vouchers or municipal general  
37 assistance;

38           2. Consider establishing a process for investigating and correcting discrimination  
39 based on income source against recipients of housing assistance;

40           3. Consider establishing a mediation process between tenants and landlords to support  
41 successful tenancy for tenants who use income-based rental assistance;

1 4. Review the incentives that currently exist to encourage landlords to accept tenants  
2 who rely on rental assistance, such as housing vouchers and municipal general assistance;

3 5. Identify reasons that landlords are unwilling or reluctant to rent to tenants who are  
4 recipients of housing vouchers, and seek input from landlords who do rent to tenants who  
5 rely on housing vouchers or other rental assistance and who wish to share positive  
6 experiences renting to those tenants;

7 6. Review efforts undertaken in other states to reduce housing and income  
8 discrimination based on source of income and to maximize the use of housing assistance,  
9 including but not limited to housing vouchers; and

10 7. Review current efforts to provide outreach and educational information to landlords  
11 concerning the rental assistance programs available.

12 **Sec. 6. Staff assistance. Resolved:** That the Legislative Council shall provide  
13 necessary staffing services to the commission, except that Legislative Council staff support  
14 is not authorized when the Legislature is in regular or special session.

15 **Sec. 7. Report. Resolved:** That, no later than November 6, 2024, the commission  
16 shall submit a report that includes its findings and recommendations, including suggested  
17 legislation, to the joint standing or joint select committee of the Legislature having  
18 jurisdiction over housing matters for presentation to the 132nd Legislature in 2025.'

19 Amend the bill by relettering or renumbering any nonconsecutive Part letter or section  
20 number to read consecutively.

21 **SUMMARY**

22 This amendment replaces the bill with a resolve that establishes the Commission to  
23 Improve Tenant-Landlord Relationships and Maximize the Use of Housing Vouchers. The  
24 commission is charged with examining issues relating to housing discrimination based on  
25 the use of income-based rental assistance and incentivizing landlords to rent to tenants who  
26 rely on income-based rental assistance such as housing vouchers and municipal general  
27 assistance. The commission is directed to submit a report to the joint standing or joint  
28 select committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over housing matters. The  
29 committee that receives the report is authorized to submit legislation to the 132nd  
30 Legislature in 2025 based on the recommendations in the report.

31 **FISCAL NOTE REQUIRED**

32 **(See attached)**