

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD

TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-ONE

**JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE STRUGGLE OF
MAINE RESIDENTS WITH HOUSING COSTS AND THE
INADEQUACY OF HOUSING STOCK**

WHEREAS, the writers of the Constitution of Maine articulated the natural rights of all Maine people as including rights of pursuing and obtaining safety and happiness as well as acquiring, possessing and protecting property; and

WHEREAS, the median home price in the State has increased by 55% in the last decade due to short supply and high demand; and

WHEREAS, for 5 consecutive years, a majority of Maine households have been unable to afford the median home sale price; and

WHEREAS, for 20 consecutive years, a majority of Maine renter households have been unable to afford the median rent for a 2-bedroom apartment; and

WHEREAS, over 30,000 citizens of the State are on waiting lists to gain access to 14,000 affordable housing units in the State and only 250 new units are created each year; and

WHEREAS, 26,000 households in the State are on the Centralized Housing Choice Voucher waiting list and the wait times for those subsidies can last for years; and

WHEREAS, nearly one out of 5 homes in the State are considered vacant according to the United States Census Bureau, the highest percentage of vacant homes of any state in the United States; and

WHEREAS, hospitals are unable to discharge patients due to a lack of supportive and affordable housing placements, causing far greater expense than the cost of providing such housing; and

WHEREAS, prisons and jails are unable to discharge people into supportive, affordable housing, contributing to recidivism and causing far greater hardship and expense than the cost of providing such housing; and

WHEREAS, businesses throughout the State are experiencing difficulty recruiting and retaining workers due to the high cost and lack of available housing; and

WHEREAS, the Governor's Economic Recovery Committee recommends the development of robust housing policies and programs that enable Maine people to live and raise their families near their work; and

WHEREAS, this shortage of affordable housing exists in every part of the State and has a direct impact on the health and welfare of Maine people; and

WHEREAS, our ability to build a strong, prosperous State that provides opportunity for every resident is threatened by our residents' lack of access to affordable housing; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Thirtieth Legislature now assembled in the First Special Session, on behalf of the people we represent, recognize that the majority of Maine households are struggling to afford housing costs, that the current supply and condition of the State's housing stock are inadequate to meet the basic needs of the State's citizens and that action must be taken to address these issues.