

HOUSING

LD 364: An Act to Promote Economic Development in Maine

Summary: The bill is a resolve to direct the Maine Office of Community Affairs to work with Office of Policy and Legal Analysis and the Office of the Revisor of Statutes to overhaul the statute governing manufactured housing. The idea is to update the statute, so the Maine Office of Community Affairs manages mobile home parks and the oversight of the construction of manufactured housing.

Implications: The bill attempts to make progress on improving the oversight of manufactured housing. However, the industry was hoping to streamline building code standards and facilitate the construction of factory-built housing.

Public Hearings:

Tues 3/3 1PM @ Cross, Room 206

LD 2216: An Act to Establish the Maine Blue Economy Center

Summary: The bill would create a Blue Economy Center at the Maine Technology Institute and be overseen by a 15 person board to make investments into the Blue Economy sector. Blue Economy is defined as “economic activity relating to aquaculture and marine vegetation, marine biotechnology, ocean data and marine research, resilient coastal infrastructure, sustainable boat building or marine propulsion for the purpose of improving human, animal and environmental health, including business, manufacturing, research, education and other activities.” The bill has a fiscal note of \$1 million.

Implications: The bill attempts to organize investments in Maine’s marine economy and foster innovation in what has been a cornerstone of Maine’s economy for generations.

Public Hearings:

Tues 3/5 1:15PM @ Cross, Room 206

LD 2224: An Act to Reduce Certain Costs Associated with Residential Construction

Summary: The bill implements the consensus recommendations of the working group that worked to make recommendations to lower the costs of housing production. These recommendations including eliminating a requirement for smoke curtains to be a part of

elevator installation, video cameras in elevators, studies fire sprinkler requirements, include wireless technology for emergency communication.

Implications: The bill would reduce some compliance costs for residential construction in the state. There were many other recommendations from the working group and housing advocates are pushing for additional changes in the legislation to build on the current draft of LD 2224. These recommendations include:

- 6) Allow up to 6 stories of single-stair residential construction
- 6) Expand municipal subdivision review thresholds from 3 lots to up to 5 lots
- 6) Increase the residential sprinkler threshold from 3 units to 5 units
- 6) Prohibit municipal requirements for sprinklers in single-family housing
- 6) Add a MUBEC board member with affordable housing experience to ensure cost impacts of code decisions are fully considered
- 6) Allow smaller, readily available elevators in buildings up to 3 stories where elevators are not otherwise required

Public Hearing:

Tues 3/5 1:15PM @ Cross, Room 206

LD 2164 – An Act to Assist Communities with Converting Vacant School Buildings into Housing

Summary: The bill proposes to create a program at the newly developed State Redevelopment Land Bank for converting vacant school buildings into housing development. The bill would have a fiscal cost of \$5 million. The funds would be used to reduce the barriers for conversion rather than directly fund conversions.

Implications: The bill would accelerate the transition of municipal schools into housing projects and potentially increase supply of housing units.

Work Sessions:

Tues 3/3 1:30PM @ Cross, Room 206