

**TESTIMONY OF THE MAINE ASSOCIATION OF PLANNERS
TO THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON STATE AND
LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY PROVIDED
NEITHER FOR NOR AGAINST LD 970
“AN ACT TO ENCOURAGE POLICIES REGARDING
ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS UNDER LOCAL
COMPREHENSIVE PLANS AND ZONING REQUIREMENTS”**

DATE OF HEARING: Wednesday, March 13, 2019

**Honorable Senator Ned Claxton, Honorable Representative Danny Martin,
Distinguished Members of the Committee on State and Local Government:**

My name is Justin Barker. I am providing written testimony on behalf of the Maine Association of Planners Legislative and Policy Committee to testify neither for nor against LD 970. The Maine Association of Planners, or MAP, is an organization of over 100 members, including professional public, private, and nonprofit planners, citizen volunteers serving on local boards, and Mainers from other professions like attorneys, landscape architects, professors, and developers. Though our membership works in diverse settings, we are all dedicated to enhancing the practice of planning in Maine.

MAP is encouraged by the advancement of State growth management policies to address current planning issues. However, two (2) modifications to LD 970 are advised:

1. MAP strongly urges the Committee to consider amending LD 970 to “encourage” policies that provide for accessory dwelling units, rather than “establish” (Sec. 6 30-A MRS §4326- sub§3-A, G, as amended; and Sec. 9 30-A MRS §4326, sub-§3-A, L, as amended).
2. MAP advises expanding the definition of accessory dwelling unit to encourage more flexibility. Specifically: allow detached accessory structures to be converted to ADUs.



Many communities across the nation are experiencing issues related to housing, and Maine communities are no exception. Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) can serve an important role in satisfying housing demand through infill development, while also diversifying the housing stock, providing opportunities for supplemental income to existing homeowners, and allowing for aging in place. It is for these reasons that MAP is generally in support of policies that encourage ADUs.

LD 970 would require every community to allow ADUs, regardless of whether or not it would be appropriate for a Maine municipality. It is important that each community be provided the opportunity to make informed decisions about growth management. Local policy makers should be able to decide if allowing ADUs is an appropriate policy tool to address housing needs. Some communities may determine the existing housing stock and public infrastructure is not able to accommodate the additional density of ADUs, or that community growth should focus on commercial development rather than encouraging higher density residential uses.

The current text of LD 970 limits the definition of accessory dwelling units to only those located within a, "detached single-family dwelling unit." This definition does not allow for a detached accessory structure ADU, such as an apartment over a detached garage, which many communities have implemented with success.

MAP would be happy to answer any questions you may have about our testimony and would be pleased to work with the committee as it considers LD 970.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns.

