

December 21, 2022

Testimony in support of LD 3 “An Act to Establish the Winter Energy Relief Payment Program to Aid Residents with High Heating Costs and to Finalize the COVID Pandemic Relief Payment Program”

President Jackson, Speaker Talbot Ross, and distinguished members of the Legislature’s Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee, my name is Joe Baldacci and I proudly represent the good people of Senate District 9, which makes up Bangor and Hermon.

I am here today to testify in support of LD 3, a crucial emergency measure that provides direct heating and housing relief to Mainers. We all have seen that heating costs are continuing to rise at an alarming rate, and our constituents are suffering. Not only that, but the end of the emergency rental assistance program also left many Mainers confronting possible eviction from their residences. The fact of the matter is that people need our help. It is our duty as lawmakers to pass legislation that helps and supports the people that we represent. Doing anything less would betray the trust that the people have placed in us.

I am here to share with this Committee that LD 3 through its direct tax rebates will benefit more than 22,000 taxpayers in Bangor and Hermon with a total of nearly \$12 million they can spend on their own budgets this winter season. That is in addition to the heating and rental assistance which will help hundreds of Bangor and Hermon homeowners heat their homes and keep their housing. And by keeping homes intact we help keep families intact and we keep people working and contributing to society.

This legislation has strong bipartisan support, and presents each of us with the opportunity to do the right thing. It is with this in mind, that I urge the committee vote ought to pass, so that when we convene in January, we can do the right thing for the people who need our help. Thank you.

Joseph M. Baldacci

State Senator