

STATE OF MAINE

In House _____

WHEREAS, Maine is in the midst of a housing crisis due to the lack of quality affordable housing options in communities all across the State; and

WHEREAS, the fair market rent for a 2-bedroom unit is unaffordable to the average household renter according to data from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development; and

WHEREAS, the number of existing houses on the market in the State is below average and the median house price in the State is unaffordable for the median income household in 15 out of 16 counties according to the Maine State Housing Authority; and

WHEREAS, the number of unhoused residents has reached an all-time high as the State heads into the cold winter months; and

WHEREAS, the lack of quality affordable housing is exacerbating the State's workforce shortage and making it harder for employers to fill critical positions; now, therefore, be it

ORDERED, the Senate concurring, that the Joint Select Committee on Housing is established as follows.

1. Establishment. The Joint Select Committee on Housing, referred to in this order as "the committee," is established.

2. Membership. The committee consists of 13 members of the Legislature: 3 members of the Senate appointed by the President of the Senate and 10 members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The President of the Senate shall appoint no more than 2 Senators from the party holding the largest number of seats in the Senate and no more than one Senator from the party holding the 2nd largest number of seats in the Senate. The Speaker of the House of Representatives shall appoint no more than 6 Representatives from the party holding the largest number of seats in the House of Representatives and no more than 4 Representatives from the party holding the 2nd largest number of seats in the House of Representatives. Nothing in this section precludes the appointment of a member who is not a member of the party holding the largest number of seats or the 2nd largest number of seats in the chamber. The first-named Senate and House members shall serve as cochaIRS of the committee.

3. Authority. The committee shall hold public hearings and work sessions on any legislation referred to it and shall vote on and report out the legislation to the appropriate chamber in the manner prescribed in Joint Rule 310. In addition to reporting out legislation referred to it, the committee is authorized to submit legislation to the House of Representatives concerning housing matters. The committee is also authorized to seek information from experts on housing matters.

4. Meetings; staff assistance. The committee may meet on days and at locations jointly authorized by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The Legislative Council shall provide staffing to the committee. The cochaIRS of the committee may request technical assistance from appropriate sources whenever necessary. The committee shall report out all legislation referred to it in accordance with deadlines established by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

5. Termination. Unless the committee is extended by joint order, the committee terminates with the final adjournment of the Second Regular Session of the 131st Legislature.

SPONSORED BY: _____

(Speaker TALBOT ROSS, R.)

TOWN: Portland