



To: 131st Legislature Joint Standing Committee on Housing

From: Daniel Brennan, Director

Date: January 24, 2023

Subject: \$21M Appropriation to MaineHousing from LD 3/PL 1

Public Law 1, 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, appropriated \$21M to the Emergency Housing Relief Fund Program to MaineHousing to specifically assist in addressing the emergency housing needs of people experiencing, or at imminent risk of experiencing, homelessness.

Our goal is to address the crisis of unsheltered homelessness in Maine, specifically unsheltered homelessness during the winter months of 2023. To that end, on January 13, 2023 MaineHousing issued two Notices of Funding Availability:

- In the short-term, we are looking for proposals to support existing or funding new overnight warming shelters as soon as possible through April 30, 2023. This funding will only be used to expand beyond existing MaineHousing funded shelter services. Warming Shelters will be designed to meet the needs of individuals and families experiencing literal homelessness.
- For the longer term, we are also looking for proposals to provide longer-term solutions to unsheltered homelessness through permanent supportive housing, shelter beds, or other opportunities that will continually provide warm, safe, and dry accommodations. We will assess these proposals after we have assessed the immediate short-term proposals above.

In addition to these efforts, funding from this allocation will also be used to keep those persons who have been housed in hotels since December 1, 2022 safely in those rooms until the end of April 2023, to the extent those individuals have not found another housing solution.

Our overall goal with this funding is to maintain flexibility to quickly respond to emergency situations as they arise during this winter season.