

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2025

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Legislative Document

No. 1569

H.P. 1027

House of Representatives, April 10, 2025

**Resolve, to Direct the Department of Economic and Community  
Development to Form a Stakeholder Group to Analyze and Improve  
Home Repair Funding Programs in the State**

(EMERGENCY)

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Reference to the Committee on Housing and Economic Development suggested and  
ordered printed.

*Robert B. Hunt*

ROBERT B. HUNT  
Clerk

Presented by Representative KESSLER of South Portland.

1       **Emergency preamble.** Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not  
2 become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

3       **Whereas,** Maine's aging housing stock, combined with extreme weather patterns and  
4 rising energy costs, presents an urgent threat to the safety and well-being of homeowners,  
5 particularly low-income, elderly and rural residents; and

6       **Whereas,** delayed home repairs are known to exacerbate health risks, increase energy  
7 consumption and cause financial hardship for homeowners; and

8       **Whereas,** the establishment of a stakeholder group to address gaps in funding and  
9 improve home repair programs is essential to mitigate these risks; and

10       **Whereas,** prompt action is necessary to ensure that Maine homeowners are equipped  
11 with the resources needed to maintain safe, resilient and energy-efficient homes; and

12       **Whereas,** in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within  
13 the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as  
14 immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now,  
15 therefore, be it

16       **Sec. 1. Stakeholder group established. Resolved:** That the Department of  
17 Economic and Community Development shall establish a stakeholder group, referred to in  
18 this resolve as "the stakeholder group," to analyze efforts within the State to fund home  
19 repair programs and provide general funding for homeowners in need of home repairs. The  
20 stakeholder group shall review existing programs, identify gaps in funding and propose  
21 strategies to improve the effectiveness and accessibility of home repair funding initiatives.

22       **Sec. 2. Membership. Resolved:** That the stakeholder group must consist of the  
23 following members:

24           1. The Commissioner of Economic and Community Development, or the  
25 commissioner's designee, who serves as chair;

26           2. The director of the Maine State Housing Authority, or the director's designee;

27           3. A representative from a financial institution that provides home improvement loans,  
28 appointed by the Commissioner of Economic and Community Development;

29           4. A representative from a nonprofit organization that provides home repair assistance  
30 to low-income or elderly homeowners, appointed by the director of the Maine State  
31 Housing Authority;

32           5. A representative from the Maine Municipal Association, appointed by the  
33 Commissioner of Economic and Community Development;

34           6. A representative from a regional community action agency, appointed by the  
35 Commissioner of Economic and Community Development;

36           7. A general contractor with experience in residential repairs, appointed by the  
37 Commissioner of Economic and Community Development;

38           8. A representative from the office of aging and disability services within the  
39 Department of Health and Human Services, appointed by the Commissioner of Health and  
40 Human Services; and

9. Any additional members considered necessary by the Commissioner of Economic and Community Development to ensure comprehensive stakeholder representation.

**Sec. 3. Duties. Resolved:** That the stakeholder group shall:

1. Conduct a comprehensive review of existing home repair funding programs in the State, including eligibility criteria, application processes and program outcomes;

2. Collect and analyze data on the effectiveness of current programs, including the number of homeowners served, the types of repairs funded, the typical cost of repairs and the geographic distribution of services;

3. Identify gaps in funding and barriers to access, particularly for low-income, elderly and rural homeowners;

4. Explore innovative funding mechanisms, including public-private partnerships, tax credits, bonding and revolving loan funds;

5. Evaluate best practices from other states and jurisdictions;

6. Solicit input from homeowners, contractors and community organizations on their experiences with existing programs and their suggestions for improvements;

7. Assess the financial, health, energy and economic impacts resulting from delayed home repairs, including potential long-term costs and risks; and

8. Develop recommendations for legislative, regulatory and program changes to improve the effectiveness and accessibility of home repair funding in the State.

**Sec. 4. Staff assistance. Resolved:** That the Department of Economic and Community Development shall provide staff assistance to the stakeholder group.

**Sec. 5. Meetings and reporting. Resolved:** That the stakeholder group shall hold public hearings to gather input from stakeholders and the general public. The Commissioner of Economic and Community Development shall submit a report on the stakeholder group's findings and recommendations, including proposed legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development by December 3, 2025. The joint standing committee may submit a bill to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature based on the report.

**Emergency clause.** In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.

## SUMMARY

This resolve directs the Department of Economic and Community Development to establish a stakeholder group to analyze existing efforts to fund home repair programs and provide general funding for homeowners in need of home repairs. The group will review current programs, identify gaps in funding and propose strategies to improve the availability and effectiveness of these programs. The department will submit a report with the stakeholder group's recommendations and proposed legislation to the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development by December 3, 2025. The joint standing committee may submit a bill related to the report to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature.