

FIVE REASONS TO SUPPORT THE UNIFORM BUILDING & ENERGY CODE:

The Majority Report on LD 2257

- I. **THE UNIFORM BUILDING CODE PROVIDES VITAL SUPPORT FOR REVITALIZING OUR DOWNTOWNS, VILLAGES & MAIN STREETS.** With the passage of LD 262, the Historic Tax Credit, many redevelopment projects could be undertaken across the state – but without the uniform code in place, these projects will be more difficult, time consuming and costly. The Uniform Building Code will mean widespread use of the rehabilitation code, which will drive significant economic investment from the redevelopment of our historic buildings. The voluntary approach isn't working with the current model rehabilitation code; just three towns have adopted it and there's no training or technical assistance available to boost its use.

- II. **THE BUILDING & ENERGY CODE LEVELS THE PLAYING FIELD – IT'S GOOD FOR THE ECONOMY AND GOOD FOR THE CONSUMER.** The business community will benefit from a uniform, predictable, consistent policy, saving money on individual projects and providing a strong incentive to invest in Maine. Homeowners will save money *from day one*: energy savings from building to the code immediately outweigh any costs, yielding \$100 million in savings over the next ten years through simple efficiency improvements in new construction. The current system does not work: 85% of new homes in Maine fail to meet the minimum energy standard and, as a result, Maine families are burdened with unnecessarily high heating bills.

- III. **TOWNS UNDER 2,000 ARE EXEMPTED.** For the majority of towns in Maine, the uniform building and energy code will not be enforced.

- IV. **THERE ARE OPTIONS AND FLEXIBILITY FOR CONDUCTING BUILDING INSPECTIONS.** The Majority Report includes choices for code implementation in towns. Towns can use their existing code enforcement officers; share such officers with other local or regional governments; or do no inspections at all, instead relying on the builder to arrange and pay for a certified third party inspector to do the job. (This inspection would then be reported to the town for use with *existing* certificate of occupancy.) Towns can charge appropriate building permit fees to cover the cost of building inspections, as many currently do. Training in the statewide code will be free to municipalities, and available for fee to third party inspectors.

- V. **THE MAJORITY REPORT IS SUPPORTED BY A BROAD COALITION, INCLUDING:**

Maine Association of Homebuilders & Remodelers
The Retail Lumber Dealer's Association of Maine
Associated General Contractors of Maine, Inc.
Maine Building Officials and Inspectors Association
Maine Fire Chief's Association
Maine Preservation
Mattson Development
Niemann Capital
Avesta Housing
GrowSmart Maine

The 25 Organizations of the Environmental Priorities Coalition

LD 2257 Majority Report
is an *environmental*
priority bill, eligible for
scoring by MLCV.