



February 9, 2023

Dear Senator Rotundo, Chair Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and
Representative Sachs, Chair Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs:

I am writing in support of the State's annual disbursement of \$25,000 to the Maine Downtown Center (MDC) for their statewide leadership in developing Maine's downtowns.

I am the executive director of Heart of Biddeford, a Main Street organization that won the 2022 Great American Main Street Award. Our organization was honored to bring national attention to Maine's downtowns through this prestigious award. Biddeford and many other Main Street programs in the state are succeeding at building a sense of place that supports the success of small businesses and community members.

We rely on the Maine Downtown Center as a coordinating body for the 10 nationally designated Main Street programs as well as 14 affiliate communities that span the state. After a dozen years in this position, I have become familiar with coordinating programs around the country and I am amazed by the quality of service they provide.

Beyond statewide coordination and their helpful training programs, the MDC has honed their expertise at winning grant funding that benefits all of the Main Street programs. For the last few years, Heart of Biddeford provided facade loans and grants to building owners and we are currently implementing a grant to improve the entrepreneurial ecosystem – all thanks to grants secured by MDC.

We value the MDC and hope you do too. Maine downtowns are drivers of Maine's economy creating an atmosphere where start-ups and entrepreneurs can thrive and get off the ground. Thank you for your previous support of the Maine Downtown Center and I hope you will continue to support their program.

Sincerely,

Delilah Poupore
Heart of Biddeford

cc. Clerk Justin Purvis, (State House Room 228, AFA@legislature.maine.gov)

Mission Statement:

The Heart of Biddeford in partnership with the City of Biddeford, the business community, property owners, and residents, fosters economic development and improves the downtown and quality of life within its boundaries by supporting existing businesses, attracting new businesses, promoting the downtown through events and working to beautify the urban core.