

Senator Rotundo and Representative Sachs, Senator Nangle and Representative Stover and distinguished members of the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee and the State and Local Government Committee:

I am Ted (Warren) Colburn and I live at Beech Hill Farm & Bison Ranch in Waterford.

My 1st career was serving in the Coast Guard for 27 years and now in addition to the farming I conduct inspections and assist visits on Oceanographic Research Vessels on behalf of the National Science Foundation and the Navy.

I am here to speak to LD 258 and urge you to vote “ought to pass.”

I believe Global Warming is real and what we all can do to slow it down is a benefit to all, those most vulnerable will feel the impacts first and feel the impacts the most. The Community Resilience Partnership program makes economic sense for Maine whether one believes in Global Warming or not.

After the Governor’s Office of Policy, Innovation and the Future webinar during December 2021 where we learned of the Community Resilience Partnership program, my wife & I met with our town’s select board, briefed them, and was given the go ahead to form a committee that we named PEER Waterford (Partners in Energy, Efficiency, and Resilience) and with a small committee set out to gather project ideas and resilience assessments from town residents. We held 3 virtual meetings with town residents that we advertised throughout the town.

Our 1st round Community Action Grant was to improve the town hall’s heating and add AC through a heat pump system. This will reduce hydrocarbons, solve (HVAC) inadequacies, set up for a Center of Refuge as climate events become more intense, and the technology is economically sound.

This grant was also to establish a Community Garden in coordination with the Waterford World’s Fair and has been a source of education and community-building. It also provided opportunity for children through the World Fair’s Little Hands for Agriculture exhibit to see, taste and sample fresh produce they could harvest.

Our 2nd round grant was to install a solar system on the office portion of the town hall to further improve the building, raise awareness, reduce hydrocarbons, and is economically sound. We look at this to be a potential stepping stone to additional town solar capabilities.

For a small rural western hills town, these grants provide opportunities that our town would not otherwise have been able to pursue. The Community Resilience Partnership grants have brought awareness to what our town can reach. As one ponders the list of the 72 provided potential action items, one gets the feeling that there are good opportunities to improve our reduction of hydrocarbon emissions, efficiency and resilience.

Recently the Select Board of a neighboring town, Stoneham, invited us to share our experience with them. They now plan to participate.

This Community Resilience Partnership Program will have lasting benefit on the health and wellbeing of Maine’s residents. I encourage you to vote “ought to pass” on LD 258.