

Testimony of Town of Rangeley in Support of full funding for the Community Resilience Partnership

*a part of LD 2214 An Act Making Unified Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of State Government, General Fund and Other Funds, and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2024, and June 30, 2025*

March 1, 2024

Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachs, and members of the Appropriations & Financial Affairs Committee: I, Joe Roach, Town Manager of the Town of Rangeley urge the full funding for expanding the Community Resilience Partnership program, contained in the Governor's supplemental budget.

The Town of Rangeley has been members of AVCOG for many years and has utilized their planning assistance to assist our municipality in many ways. In 2023, AVCOG informed us of the Community Resilience Partnership and the resources it can provide to help our community become more resilient to climate change impacts. The town had not explored climate resiliency in the past, but with the increased flooding and extreme storms that our region faces, the town was open to working towards mitigating these issues.

The town provided a letter of support to work with AVCOG for their service provider application which was funded. AVCOG assisted us in the enrollment process of the CRP which included a community self-evaluation and soliciting public input through a public meeting. For our small municipal staff, these steps would have been very difficult to accomplish without the assistance from AVCOG and the service provider program. Towns are not eligible to apply for Community Action Grants unless they are fully enrolled in the program. Additionally, AVCOG assisted the town with writing their first grant application. Grant writing is a large task to undertake for a small town, and with the help of the service provider program and AVCOG, we were successful in our application.

In addition, the town applied for and received a \$50,000 community action grant and was assisted by AVCOG throughout the process. The town of Rangeley has always been committed to being a tourism hotspot, but with the increased climate effects in our region, the town is working toward becoming more resilient. Through meetings and public input, the town set their priorities with the main priority being converting the large town garage to heat pumps. This project cost a total of \$90,000 and would have been difficult to complete without the assistance of the CRP and AVCOG. This project will not only provide proper heating for the building but will also work towards our goal of reducing the amount of fossil fuels burned each year.

Lastly, AVCOG through the CRP assisted the town with creating a priority project list which will be complimentary to this project. This list includes projects such as energy efficient garage doors and windows, LED lighting, and insulation. AVCOG has provided the town with various funding opportunities to continue working towards our resiliency goals and the town is now set up to apply for future community action grants, and with the support of the Community Resilience Partnership, we look forward to utilizing this program in the future to continue working towards building a resilient community. We strongly encourage you to support the proposal to expand the Community Resilience Partnership as outlined in the Governor's supplemental budget.