

Melissa McCarthy
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My name is Melissa McCarthy and I serve as a Director at Large for the Blueberry Fields Cooperative in Brunswick, Maine. When our property was put on the market by the former owner, we were informed of the law that had gone into effect that the owner had to give 'reasonable consideration' to an offer of purchase by the residents of the community.

Initially, we were discussing increases of nearly \$300 to monthly lot rents, which never would have passed our vote for purchase. With funds from this grant, as well as from other sources, we were able to knock that amount down to \$100/month with minimal increases phased in over the next 5 years. 187 voting members voted unanimously to move forward with our offer to the owner, which was accepted, and we closed on October 10, 2024.

Continuation of this grant is crucial to the future of mobile home parks in Maine to help preserve affordable housing. It made a difference for our community, and it will for others in the future.

Corporations come in and systematically raise rents with no care for the quality of life, and no interest in remaining affordable. It is detrimental to residents, especially when there is a lack of housing available. If these large corporations were to be made liable to contribute \$10,000 per home of any community they purchase into this grant, it would ensure sustainability of available funds to future communities who wish to become resident owned.