

**131<sup>st</sup> Legislature**

**Joint Standing Committees on Appropriations and Financial Affairs & State and Local Government**

Testimony of Claire McGlinchey, Center for an Ecology-Based Economy, March 1, 2024

in favor of the Supplemental Budget LD2214

Good afternoon, Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachs, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs; and Senator Nangle, Representative Stover, and the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government. My name is Claire McGlinchey, and I am the Climate Resiliency Program Manager for the Center for an Ecology-Based Economy (CEBE) in Norway. Thank you for this opportunity to speak to you today in support of funding the Community Resilience Partnership's grant programs in the Supplemental Budget.

In 2022, CEBE hired me to manage their new role as a service provider for Maine's Community Resilience Partnership, providing technical assistance to towns in western Maine. I had just finished my master's coursework at the University of New Hampshire, where my research on climate adaptation taught me that community-driven resilience is essential, but lacking, in under-resourced towns with limited planning capacity like the ones in our region.

I had never been to western Maine, but I chose to move to Norway and begin working for CEBE because I believe the Community Resilience Partnership is exactly the type of program we need to foster resilience and help Maine meet its climate goals in *all* communities, not just those with the financial resources and capacity to navigate climate change impacts on their own. Two years in, I have experienced first-hand the difference this program makes in the communities we serve. In many towns, our public workshops are the first time that climate change has been formally acknowledged and discussed, and funding through the Partnership allows for the implementation of climate mitigation and adaptation projects that would otherwise not take place.

The impacts of the Partnership ripple out beyond municipal operations. Funding that improves local climate resilience also spurs our local economies, benefiting contractors in our communities and creating new jobs for young people like me who want to make a difference while making a living.

The storms that have battered Maine in recent months are a reminder of the urgent need to address our state's climate vulnerability. But the challenges we face also present an opportunity for strengthening our communities and growing green jobs across Maine. I hope you will consider approving the addition of \$5 million to the Community Resilience Partnership's grant programs.

Thank you for your time,

Claire McGlinchey, Climate Resiliency Program Manager, Center for an Ecology-Based Economy