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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GENERAL,
HOUSING, AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

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MEMORANDUM

To: Representative Catherine Toll, Chair, House Committee on Appropriations

From: Representative Helen Head, Chair, House Committee on General, Housing, and Military Affairs 

Date: February 16, 2018

Subject: Provisions in the Governor's Proposed FY 2019 State Budget

Thank you for the opportunity to review the provisions of the Governor's Proposed FY 2019 State Budget that relate to this Committee's subject area.

The Committee respectfully requests that \$250,000.00 of the amount appropriated for weatherization be dedicated to the HEAT Squad Program administered by NeighborWorks of Western Vermont. The Program provides low-cost energy audits for homes and businesses, which are a necessary step to improve the efficiency of a home or building. The HEAT Squad helps homeowners save an average of 30 percent on their home heating and cooling costs, while making their homes more comfortable year-round. Importantly, while this program serves all Vermonters, it particularly targets customers with household incomes below 120 percent of area median income, who are just above the eligibility for Vermont's low-income weatherization program. The requested funding would allow the HEAT Squad to continue its five-year effort to expand its program to the entire State. The HEAT Squad currently serves five southern counties and is beginning to work in the Northeast Kingdom. The appropriation will support the upfront investment in staff and the development of relationships with contractors and community partners that is necessary for the HEAT Squad to expand into the northwestern Vermont. The program is expected to become self-sufficient as it scales up to serve the entire State.