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Dear Chair Marcotte and committee members,

I am writing to express strong support for sustained base funding of **\$500,000** for the Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative (VOREC) Community Grant Program within the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation in the FY27 state budget.

Vermont's outdoor recreation economy is deeply connected to the vitality of our towns, working landscapes, and community well-being. The VOREC Community Grant Program has proven to be an effective and accountable investment—strengthening local economies, expanding access to outdoor recreation, supporting small businesses, and fostering stewardship of the natural resources that define our state.

Since 2019, VOREC has invested **\$11.2 million through 84 grants across all 14 Vermont counties**, demonstrating a strong return on investment for communities, municipalities, businesses, and nonprofit partners. These grants catalyze local collaboration, leverage additional funding, and create lasting infrastructure and programming that benefit both residents and visitors.

Through our work in communities we have seen how VOREC funding helped advance trail connections, strengthen downtown vitality, and support local businesses that depend on outdoor recreation. Beyond economic benefits, these investments build community pride, improve public health, and make Vermont a more welcoming and resilient place to live.

Base funding is essential to ensure this successful program continues to deliver long-term benefits rather than relying on uncertain one-time appropriations. A stable investment of \$500,000 will allow VOREC to plan strategically, support communities equitably, and sustain the momentum already underway across the state.

Thank you for your leadership and for considering continued support of this impactful program that invests in Vermont's outdoor communities, local economies, and shared future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Amore".

Richard Amore

Local Motion is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Our Tax ID is 03-0361422.

**Making it safe, accessible, and fun for everyone to bike, walk, and roll in Vermont.**