

R.H. RENY, INC.
731 Route 1
Newcastle, Maine 04553
Phone: (207) 563-3177
Fax: (207) 563-5681
E-mail us at:
feedback @ renys.com



STORES IN MAINE
Damariscotta - Gardiner
Damariscotta Underground
Farmington - Bath - Camden
Ellsworth - Dexter - Madison
Pittsfield - Saco - Topsham
Belfast - Bridgton - Portland - Wells

November 13, 2015

Deborah Johnson, Director
Office of Community Development
Maine Department of Economic & Community Development

Dear Ms. Johnson:

I am writing in total support of the Maine Downtown Center (MDC), and in complete opposition to the elimination of funding for MDC and downtown revitalization from the 2016 CDBG program.

Downtowns are one of Maine's strongest economic drivers. As Maine's community development expert, you know better than I do how significant a role our downtowns play in Maine's economic landscape. Maine's small businesses are the backbone of Maine's economy, and it is no accident that many of these businesses thrive in downtowns across the state. Ten of our sixteen stores are in the heart of Maine's downtowns, and have been for the last 65 years. We employ over 500 people, and we know first-hand that downtowns are the destination for many of visitors, and the core of the community for our local residents.

I can tell you that Renys has benefited from both the MDC program and the incentives and opportunities provided by CDBG projects. There is no other community development support like it locally or in the whole state of Maine; its absence would make no sense from an economic development perspective.

The Maine Downtown Center and its member organizations are the first number we dial for help – not the town manager, not the chamber – the local downtown program. The MDC is in front of events, policies, and regional efforts; without the MDC in Augusta initiating and supporting the strong local efforts, the momentum and expertise will be lost, leaving no support for independent businesses on Main Street.

Businesses like Renys need experienced Main Street programs now more than ever. I request that funding is retained for both the Maine Downtown Center and the CDBG program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John E. Reny". The signature is fluid and cursive.

John E. Reny
President
R.H. Reny, Inc.