217 South Main Street, Suite 5
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To: Chair of the House Committee

Re: House Bill 12 Hearing - Tuesday, January 14 at 10:50AM

As the Director of the Hamilton Downtown Association I am writing in support of the City of Hamilton's Montana Historic Preservation Grant (MHPG) Application for exterior renovations to the Historic Hamilton Town Hall project recommended for funding by Department of Commerce staff in the Governor's 2027 Biennium Executive Budget. We are a Montana Main Street Program organization, implementing the programs and projects set forth in the City of Hamilton Downtown Master Plan. This project with its proximity to our local retail core, aligns with our goals for revitalization and creates an opportunity for increased foot traffic and visibility for our downtown corridor, as well as clustering civic buildings with proximity to the Public Library and County Administration Buildings, while honoring one of our community's most historic assets. Further, as participants in the steering committee, we were encouraged by the City of Hamilton's thorough community involvement process and significant support for renovation to the Historic Town Hall.

We fully recommend the proposed MHPG project completing exterior renovations to Hamilton's Historic Town Hall. This includes window replacement and restoration, east entrance door replacement and restoration, east entrance stair restoration, landscaping, and restoration of the exterior rusticated bases. All of this work will be done in accordance with the Secretary of Interior Standards for Historic Properties. This project is the first action of a larger, multi-phase project to move City Hall offices back to the historic structure and allow for expansion of the Bitterroot Public Library.

Thank you for considering my recommendation. If you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Robin Pruitt
Executive Director
Hamilton Downtown Association

Nicole TenHaken, President | Laci Rose, Treasurer| Tara Child| Craig Kaul I Ryan Williams | Amy Liss | Katrina Mendrey | Whitney Weidow | Jodi McKay

Superintendent
Nicole Hanson
nhanson@lavinapublicschools.com

Lavina Public School
"Home of the Bearcats"
PO Box 290 214 1st St E
Lavina, MT 59046
Phone: (406)636–2761 Fax: (406)636–4911

Clerk
Charly Tatom
ctatom@lavinapublicschools.com

January 14, 2025

Dear Appropriations Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on the Lavina School Historic District Preservation Project. This initiative is a critical investment in our community, combining the preservation of local heritage with economic development.

Since its establishment in 1919, the Lavina School in Golden Valley County, Montana, has been a cornerstone of education and community life. As a registered historic district, it continues to offer K-12 education and serve as a hub for local events and activities. Lavina's importance to the region is further underscored by its feature on the program *Crossroads of Montana*.

The preservation project not only safeguards a historic structure but also generates meaningful economic benefits. With $292,410 allocated for renovations, the project will create local construction jobs, providing immediate support to skilled tradespeople and strengthening economic stability in our community.

Beyond its economic impact, this project will enhance access to essential school facilities, such as athletic fields and community spaces, providing children with safe and engaging environments to learn, play, and grow. These areas foster teamwork, creativity, and a sense of belonging among students while also serving as a hub for broader community connections. The All-School Lavina Reunion, a cherished event held every five years, coincides with the planned construction in June and offers an opportunity for children to witness and participate in celebrating their school's history and community spirit. Importantly, with construction primarily outdoors, the building will remain fully accessible during the summer for community programs and events, ensuring uninterrupted access to enrichment opportunities for children and residents alike.

The facility also plays a vital role in hosting essential programs, including EMT training, adult education classes, craft bazaars featuring local artisans, and various sporting events. Planned updates will ensure that the Lavina School remains a safe, welcoming, and historically significant space for all who use it.

The project's funding demonstrates a shared commitment between state resources and the local community, with 80% supported by the Montana Historic Preservation Grant and 20% through local matching funds. This partnership underscores a collective dedication to preserving our past while advancing economic and educational opportunities.

Thank you for considering the Lavina School Preservation Project. By doing so, you help ensure that this historic landmark continues to honor our shared history while serving as a vital community asset for future generations.

Sincerely,

Nicole Hanson

January 14, 2024

Testimony in favor of HB 12
Support for Lincoln School Foundation Montana Historic Preservation Grant request

Katherine Daly
Lincoln School Foundation Board Member

Good morning,

My name is Katherine Daly, I'm a board member with the Lincoln School Foundation, which is a volunteer-run non-profit organization dedicated to serving Park County by providing Park County's nonprofits, entrepreneurs, and artists affordable office, studio, and public space in our historic building.

In my allotted five minutes, I want to highlight why the Lincoln School is important, reiterate the Lincoln School Foundation's need for rehabilitation, and share the significance MHPG funding would have to Park County's economy.

The Lincoln School Foundation operates the 1914 Lincoln School, an elegant three-story brick schoolhouse with Renaissance revival doorways and masonry work that presides over an intersection at the heart of Livingston's downtown historic district.

The school has had many lives. Shortly after it opened, the building cemented its place in Montana history when in the fall of 1918, students were sent home, teachers volunteered as nurses, and the school was conscripted as a field hospital in the nationwide fight against the Spanish Flu. After serving the public in this capacity–as many schools across Montana did–it resumed its intended role until 1974. Some of our community members still remember attending classes and growing up at the Lincoln School.

Today, the Lincoln School provides affordable office, meeting, athletic, and performance space that support 28 tenants:

- 7 local non-profit organizations, including an organization that provides fresh, healthy food to school children, an organization that restores wetlands, a kid's athletic club, and our newest tenant, which helps veterans re-enter civilian life through careers in cybersecurity.
- 21 local businesses, which range from a food truck and a salon to mental health counselling and a media production studio.

Our building also houses two affordable public venues used by many more local groups and organizations, including home school groups, educators teaching classes, and non-profits who aren't tenants that we allow to use the spaces for free events and board meetings.

Many people rely on the Lincoln School for their livelihoods, for resources for their children, and the services and experiences that make Livingston's downtown vibrant and unique, and are heavily impacted by the building's deficiencies related to climate control and general safety.

The biggest of these issues is our half-century old steam boiler, which failed during the winter of 2022 and is currently operating at 50% capacity or less. As such, we are wasting a lot of energy and money on heating in the colder months. Our analysis found that upgrading our current boiler to one that is 80% efficient could save us $2,600 per month in the winter (at least 5 months), conservatively amounting to a

savings of $12,500 per year. These savings can be reinvested into our building to improve public accessibility and help keep costs low for our tenants.

Replacing our boiler will be complemented by a handful of projects, including restoration of defining Renaissance Revival architectural features, like the building's three entryways and Tudor-inspired masonry, installation of 84 storm windows over original, single-pane windows, and replacement of windows that are seriously deteriorated or covered by glass block.

Overall the proposed project will accomplish several goals:

- Remediating safety hazards for tenants and visitors
- Improving climate control
- restoring the school's 1914 facade
- decreasing operating costs
- and enhancing building security.

We also expect this project to positively impact our local economy in the following six ways:

1. Maintaining and enhancing critical affordable work, performance, athletic, and meeting space in downtown Livingston for our 28 tenants and the many more community members who use and visit our building every month.
2. Directly creating 10 jobs from construction.
3. Starting a "ripple" effect leading to the rehabilitation of other historic properties totalling an estimated $3.69M in investment and an estimated 54 jobs.
4. Remediating blight to increase the taxable value of Livingston's Urban Renewal District, which will be re-invested in our downtown.
5. Attract new small and startup businesses, which is where almost all new net job creation comes from and which frequently locate in historic districts.

The Livingston Urban Renewal Agency recognizes the historical, cultural, and economic contributions of the Lincoln School and has pledged $100,000 to support this work, provided we are awarded MHPG funding.

On behalf of the Lincoln School Foundation board, our 28 tennants, and the 100s of community members who visit our building each month, I thank you for your time and consideration and encourage you to award our project full funding.

I would be happy to answer any questions you have.

Thank you!

Anticipated utilization of MHPG funding:

- Lincoln School Foundation's total MHPG request is $364,980.
    - We are an entirely volunteer organization, so we allotted $33,180 (the allowed 10% of requested funds) to hire someone to administer this grant.
    - The remaining $331,800 will be spent on construction costs, which we expect will have increased since we received a bid for the proposed work in January 2023:
        - Roughly $200,000 would cover replacing our failing boiler.

- The remaining $131,800 would address the following safety hazards:
    - Roughly $25,000 would repair our crumbling parapet wall and cap, which currently poses a safety hazard to people accessing the building who might be hit by falling masonry and debris.
    - Roughly $25,000 to remediate the exterior flaking paint on our masonry trim that is likely lead-based and repaint the same color
    - Roughly $81,800 to restore the building's three architecturally-defining entryways by replacing broken glass block and installing period-appropriate doors that shut and lock securely and reliably, among other activities.

January 14, 2025

Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Long Range Planning (F)
Representative John Fitzpatrick, Chair
Senator John Esp, Vice Chair
Senator Ellie Boldman
Representative Scott Rosenzweig
Representative Paul Tuss
Representative Mike Vinton

RE: HB12 – Montana Historic Preservation Grant: Yaak Community Hall

Dear Chair Fitzpatrick and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kara Maplethorpe, Rural Initiatives Manager with Heart of the Rockies Initiative, and I am very fortunate to be sharing my support for the Yaak Community Hall project. The Heart of the Rockies Initiative is a land trust partnership in the Intermountain West, and we envision a region where actively engaged people and communities work together across geographic and organizational boundaries to protect, restore, and steward the lands and waters that sustain natural systems and support community livelihoods. Our Rural Initiatives Program provides technical assistance and capacity in rural communities by supporting projects that enhance the economy, landscape, and quality of life for future generations.

I've been fortunate to be invited into the Yaak community to provide support for this project – through grant writing, fundraising, acting liaison between the Community Hall Board and Lincoln County, and participation in community events. I sit on the fundraising committee that is composed of eight community members that have been so dedicated to raising over **$37,000** in matching cash donations and in-kind contributions. The fundraising committee has had a variety of creative fundraising tactics, including larch cookie pledges, a handmade quilt honoring 100 years of the Hall, and different events to reach out-of-the-area individuals and the community. We also supported the fundraising efforts by creating a project video to highlight the Hall's history, the community, and the project. This video has been tied to a variety of social media posts and to the online fundraising platform the community is utilizing, garnering more support from the broader Lincoln County community and even into Idaho!

Rural communities exemplify the uniqueness of Montana, and the Yaak Valley is no exception. The Yaak Valley community is so special and is ready to welcome visitors to share their history and get a feel for the community. A grant award for the Yaak Community Hall floor rehabilitation project will not only ensure that the community and broader public have a safe building to be in, but it will also ensure this rural community can continue to thrive with uniqueness to support future generations of Yaakers over the next 100 years.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kara Maplethorpe, Rural Initiatives Manager for Heart of the Rockies Initiative
120 Hickory Street, Suite B, Missoula, MT 59801
(715)681-0795

January 9, 2025

Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Long Range Planning (F)

Representative John Fitzpatrick, Chair
Senator John Esp, Vice Chair
Senator Ellie Boldman
Representative Scott Rosenzweig
Representative Paul Tuss
Representative Mike Vinton

RE: HB12 – Montana Historic Preservation Grant: Yaak Community Hall

Dear Chair Fitzpatrick and Members of the Committee,

My name is Sandra Beder-Miller, and I have been a fulltime Yaak resident since 2014. I am a member of the Yaak Community Hall and working on the fund raising to repair the Hall's foundation and floor.

The Hall is important to our community as a gathering place. I have attended emergency management meetings during the fire season, town halls for local candidates, school programs, club meetings, community wreath making, and Christmas parties. This is the largest public meeting place in our area available to residents and can be rented for a minimal cost. It would be tragic to lose this building.

I have organized a reading of the Declaration of Independence on the steps of the Yaak Community Hall for 5 consecutive years to celebrate our nation's Independence Day. Those who have attended this event (at least 80 people each year) remark on how they are sent back to the time of the Revolution when the declaration was read in the town square. The beauty of the location and the simplicity of the Hall's log structure help us reflect on the words. We have many children in the crowd who learn firsthand the importance of our founding document. We cap off the celebration with hotdogs, games, and neighbors visiting.

Our dedicated fund-raising committee is working very hard to raise the match dollars. Our events have shown the community the need for foundation repairs and the importance of maintaining the hall as a gathering place for years to come.

Thank you for your consideration and support of the Yaak Community and Yaak Community Hall.

Sincerely,

Sandra E Beder-Miller

Sandra E. Beder-Miller
30 Wild Sheep Drive
Troy, MT 59935
406-295-7095

January 11, 2025

Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Long Range Planning (F)
Representative John Fitzpatrick, Chair
Senator John Esp, Vice Chair
Senator Ellie Boldman
Representative Scott Rosenzweig
Representative Paul Tuss
Representative Mike Vinton

RE: HB12 – Montana Historic Preservation Grant: Yaak Community Hall

Dear Chair Fitzpatrick and Members of the Committee,

My name is Tracey McCready, and I have been a resident of the Yaak area for over 5 years and a public school educator for more than 15 years. Now, as a dedicated homeschool parent, I can attest that the Yaak Community Hall has been a cornerstone of our family's education and social activities.

The Community Hall is vital for my family and the entire community. It serves as a gathering place where we hold events, meetings, and educational activities that bring us closer together. The hall provides a space for public functions that benefit us all.

One of my cherished memories involves the gatherings at the hall, where homeschool families come together to showcase their talents. The pride and excitement on the children's faces are truly heartwarming and highlight the hall's significance. I also look forward to organizing school STEM activities, arts and crafts days, and dances, which will offer students an excellent opportunity to socialize, celebrate, and create lasting memories.

I am committed to supporting the floor repair project and would be thrilled to utilize the hall even more for our homeschool activities once it is improved. This includes organizing educational workshops, group activities, and community events that benefit everyone.

Thank you for your dedication to maintaining this essential part of our community. Together, we can ensure that the Yaak Community Hall remains a vibrant and supportive space for all.

Sincerely,

Tracey McCready

35875 Yaak River Road

Troy, MT 59935

(406) 295 – 9915

January 12, 2025

Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Long Range Planning (F)
Representative John Fitzpatrick, Chair
Senator John Esp, Vice Chair
Senator Ellie Boldman
Representative Scott Rosenzweig
Representative Paul Tuss
Representative Mike Vinton

RE: HB12 – Montana Historic Preservation Grant: Yaak Community Hall

Dear Chair Fitzpatrick and Members of the Committee,

I am B. David Gambill and have the pleasure of serving as Board Chair of the Yaak Elementary School Dist. #24 which school is one of Montana's original remaining one room schoolhouses. We have had the benefit of great support from the public in our little school and on regular occasion our students perform in various programs in the Yaak Community Hall to provide sufficient seating.

For 100 years the Yaak Community Hall has been the meeting place for the community for events such as public meetings (particularly political, fire safety, forest policy), holiday celebrations, dances, quilting, monthly Community Food Bank, family reunions, funerals, and SCHOOL ACTIVITIES.

The first time I was in the Yaak Community Hall was soon after I moved to Yaak and spoke at a July 4th celebration along with our local representative and many others including a reading of the Declaration of Independence. To facilitate activities and events like this we need to repair the floor and foundation of the building. After it is repaired, we will continue to utilize this building as the community's main public meeting place and maintain it for the next 100 years.

We sincerely seek your support for this historic community's main meeting place. The Yaak Community has provided for its own meeting place for 100 years and seeks to do so with its demonstrated track record for the next 100 years.

Sincerely,

B. David Gambill, Board Chairperson
Yaak Community School, #24
29893 Yaak River Road
Troy, MT 59935 Phone 406-295-7515

January 10, 2025

Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Long Range Planning (F)
Representative John Fitzpatrick, Chair
Senator John Esp, Vice Chair
Senator Ellie Boldman
Representative Scott Rosenzweig
Representative Paul Tuss
Representative Mike Vinton

RE: HB12 – Montana Historic Preservation Grant: Yaak Community Hall

Dear Chair Fitzpatrick and Members of the Committee,

My name is Sam Martin, the District Ranger for the Three Rivers Ranger District, Kootenai National Forest, on which the Yaak Community Hall sits.

The Yaak Community Hall has been an important part of the Yaak community for almost 100 years, providing a place that many of our local Forest Service employees use to recreate and make connections with their friends and neighbors in the local community.

The Yaak Community Hall plays a very important role in developing our wildland firefighters as we use the facility to hold classes for our annual fire guard school. The Yaak Community Hall is the only facility in the Yaak area that is large enough with an open floor plan, and electricity to operate our computers and projectors, thereby enabling us to instruct our firefighters in those topics critical to safety and operations. We also use the Yaak Community Hall as a meeting place to brief our local community during high fire activity as well as a meeting place for topics of interest to the local community and area.

Thank you for your consideration and support of the Yaak Community and Yaak Community Hall.

Sincerely,

Sam A. Martin

Sam A. Martin
District Ranger
Kootenai National Forest
Three Rivers Ranger District
p: 406-295-7438
c: 406-334-6148
sam.a.martin@usda.gov

12858 US Hwy 2
Troy, MT 59935-8750

1/8/2025

Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Long Range Planning (F)

Representative John Fitzpatrick, Chair
Senator John Esp, Vice Chair
Senator Ellie Boldman
Representative Scott Rosenzweig
Representative Paul Tuss
Representative Mike Vinton

RE: HB12 – Montana Historic Preservation Grant: Yaak Community Hall

Dear Chair Fitzpatrick and Members of the Committee,

My name is Diane Downey, I have lived in Yaak Valley for 30 years and am a member of the Yaak Community Hall Board and YCH fundraising committee for the required matching funds.

The hall has been a vital part of our community for going on 100 years. Weddings, school programs and graduation ceremonies, AA meetings, baby showers, memorials, local clubs meeting place, anniversary parties, family reunions, dances, food bank distribution, family game/movie night and town hall meetings. A number of us in the valley live off grid and the YCH rents out space for us to keep our freezers.

For me personally there are so many fond memories connected to the hall but the one I treasure the most is going to my first Yaak Women's Club meeting shortly after I moved to the valley and how the ladies made me feel so welcome to my new home and I learned how to hand stitch a quilt.

Our fundraising committee is working very hard to raise the matching fund. We will continue our efforts until our goal is met. I look forward to attending events at the YCH and would like to start our monthly community potlucks up again once the floor is fixed.

This hall has served the community for 100 years, how sad would it be if we were to lose this vital part of our community.

Thank you for your consideration and support of the Yaak Community and Yaak Community Hall.

Sincerely

Diane Downey

Diane Downey
560 Evergreen Rd.
Troy, MT 59935
406-295-5846

1/12/2025

Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Long Range Planning (F)
Representative John Fitzpatrick, Chair
Senator John ESP, Vice Chair
Senator Ellie Boldman
Representative Scott Rosenzweig
Representative Paul Tuss
Representative Mike Vinton

Re: H1312- Montana Historic Preservation Grant:
Yaak Community Hall

Dear Chair Fitzpatrick and Members of the Committee,
My name is Bonnie Tomes-Surrell. I live in the Yaak Valley. I am a member of the Yaak Community Hall, and I am on the Board and hold the office of Secretary. Also, I am on the Yaak Community Hall's Fundraising Committee for required matching funds.
The Yaak Community Hall benefits the community in many ways. It is the hub for connection and learning, where both social and economic exchanges take place; Valuable training programs, educational opportunities, shared resources, community events-all fostering strong social connections in an isolated community.

I have many memories of the Yaak Hall. Once during fire season it was necessary for the people of the Yaak to come together. A fire had come very close to the Yaak proper. Phase one of the evacuation was being implemented. It was frightening .. But we had a network of support built over the years through our membership in the hall. The Yaak Community Hall anchors the community and has been our safe harbor for 100 years. With repair of the floor/foundation in the Hall, I will continue to support the Hall through my involvement with the Board, through fundraising and the many events and activities offered. We have the safety and support to continue to grow as a strong community.

Sincerely,

BONNIE TOMES-SURRELL

Bonnie Tomes- Surrell
3551 Upper Ford Rd
Troy, Montana. 59935
406-2957153

January 12, 2025

Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Long Range Planning (F)
Representative John Fitzpatrick, Chair
Senator John Esp, Vice Chair
Senator Ellie Boldman
Representative Scott Rosenzweig
Representative Paul Tuss
Representative Mike Vinton

RE: HB12 – Montana Historic Preservation Grant: Yaak Community Hall

Dear Chair Fitzpatrick and Members of the Committee,

My name is Ken Krauss, and I am currently one of the Board members at Yaak Community Church and church Administrator. In the seven years since moving to the Yaak from San Diego I have come to appreciate the value and importance of the Yaak Community Hall. It has in the past and continues to be an important place of gathering for our small community to hold various events and get-togethers. The Yaak Valley is a remote outpost in the wild mountains of NW Montana and is occupied by a rugged and independent minded people. There is a close community bond here and in many ways the Community Center is a key element that holds the community together. It is in great need of renovation. If it were at all possible to do the repairs needed it would be used for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Ken Krauss
15636 Yaak River Road
Troy, MT 59935
619-985-7775
Kenkrauss2025@gmail.com

January 12, 2025

Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Long Range Planning (F)
Representative John Fitzpatrick, Chair
Senator John Esp, Vice Chair
Senator Ellie Boldman
Representative Scott Rosenzweig
Representative Paul Tuss
Representative Mike Vinton

RE: HB12 – Montana Historic Preservation Grant: Yaak Community Hall

Dear Chair Fitzpatrick and Members of the Committee:

My name is Lawrence Miller, and I have been a permanent resident of the Yaak for almost 11 years. When I first settled in the Yaak, our Community Hall was used frequently for a wide variety of community events, from school plays, to weddings, to dances, to emergency management meetings, and Christmas parties. Unfortunately, as the hall nears 100 years old it is increasingly showing its age, and a failing floor has significantly reduced the utility of the building for such events.

Put simply, the Yaak Community Hall has been the center of community life in our valley. We want to ensure that the Hall will remain as such a place for those who come after us.

As a member of the Upper Yaak Volunteer Fire Service Area, the hall has on multiple occasions held emergency management meetings, specifically to address questions concerning wildland fires that have started nearby. In cooperation with the USDA Forest Service from the Kootenai National Forest, these meetings are critical to maintaining community awareness in a time of increased fire danger.

I can assure you that, if we are able to repair the foundation and floor of the Yaak Community Hall, it will again be used for a wide variety of events. I am fully committed to making this happen.

The Yaak Community Hall is a wonderful, historic structure that has served our community for 100 years. With appropriate rehab and repair, it will serve the Yaak for another 100 years.

Thank you for your consideration and support of the Yaak Community and Yaak Community Hall.

Sincerely,

Lawrence K. Miller
30 Wild Sheep Drive
Troy, MT 59935
406-295-7095

January 10, 2025

Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Long Range Planning (F)
Representative John Fitzpatrick, Chair
Senator John Esp, Vice Chair
Senator Ellie Boldman
Representative Scott Rosenzweig
Representative Paul Tuss
Representative Mike Vinton

RE: HB12 – Montana Historic Preservation Grant: Yaak Community Hall

Dear Chair Fitzpatrick and Members of the Committee,

I'm Sarah Rusnak. Though I've only lived in Yaak just short of 2 years, I grew up and raised my children nearby in rural Idaho. As a young single mom I chose the path of a solopreneur so that I could take care of myself, make an income, and have adequate time to care for my children. I pieced together work as massage therapist, a yoga instructor and event planner.

I didn't expect to teach yoga when I moved to Yaak but the word got out and soon there were community members letting me know that they'd be thrilled to have a yoga class to go to right up here in our mountain community. Several people suggested that we hold classes at the community hall but with the floor the way that it is, it just wasn't an option. It's not safe or comfortable enough for our needs.

We did find a small place to hold our yoga classes, which include both men and women ranging in ages from folks in their thirties to their eighties! I feel inspired to continue supporting folks, especially my elders, so that they can continue to be able-bodied and strong, which is almost a requirement for living up here.

I am committed to help see this restoration project through. I personally understand the importance of a gathering place in rural communities. Much of my income as a yoga teacher and event planner was made possible because of community centers and yoga studios. Once the floor is repaired in the Yaak Community Hall I would like to host workshops, events and day retreats where I would advertise outside of the Yaak community, bringing guests and participants to Yaak to enjoy the serene landscape and quietude, a perfect place for a yoga and wellness getaway.

In conclusion, I have a number of ideas that will be made possible through the restoration of this beautiful and historic building. My vision is to serve the people who live here, while also providing opportunities for guests to visit and stay in our community for a day or two at a time - the Yaak Community Hall is part of what will make my ideas possible.

Thank you for your consideration and support of the Yaak Community and Yaak Community Hall.

Sincerely,

Sarah Rusnak
482 Upper Ford Rd
Troy, MT 59935

January 11,2025

Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Long Range Planning (F)
Representative John Fitzpatrick, Chair
Senator John Esp, Vice Chair
Senator Ellie Boldman
Representative Scott Rosenzweig
Representative Paul Tuss
Representative Mike Vinton

RE: HB12 – Montana Historic Preservation Grant: Yaak Community Hall

Dear Chair Fitzpatrick and Members of the Committee,

My name is Lori Chupp, I'm the Director of The Yaak Food Cupboard and also a long time member of the Yaak Community Hall.

The Community Hall has long been an integral part of the valley. There have been Weddings, Funerals, Baptisms, Birthday, Christmas parties & many other events. Including The Food Cupboards use of it monthly to do a Rescue Programs Distribution monthly for the last two years & ongoing.

I have many wonderful memories of the Community Hall. Movie nights for families, with pot lucks & popcorn in the late 80's. My daughter's wedding. My Grand Son's Baptism. My Grand Daughter's third Birthday, after she was diagnosed with a serious blood disorder. The families of the valley coming thru to pick their Christmas Dinner & pick out coats, snow pants, hats & mittens for their children, makes my heart sing!

My family will continue to support the Yaak Community Hall, to the best of our ability. The Yaak Food Cupboard will continue to use the Hall in the long term to help our community.

It is my hope that the Yaak Community Hall will be here, part of our valley for many years to come. Thank you for your consideration and support of the Yaak Community and Yaak Community Hall.

Sincerely,

Lori Chupp

60 River View Drive
Troy, MT 59935
(406) 295-4048

January 12, 2025

Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Long Range Planning (F)

Representative John Fitzpatrick, Chair

Senator John Esp, Vice Chair

Senator Ellie Boldman

Representative Scott Rosenzweig

Representative Paul Tuss

Representative Mike Vinton

RE: HB12 – Montana Historic Preservation Grant: Yaak Community Hall

Dear Chair Fitzpatrick and Members of the Committee,

My name is Craig Johnson, I have served on the Community Hall board for approx. 10 years.

The Community Hall has been the main location to hold community and private events like town hall meetings, community interest events, weddings, food bank distributions etc.

The community's 4th of July parade ends at the community hall where refreshments and discussions are enjoyed by many.

As the Community Hall's board chair and event coordinator, I look forward to many more years of helping keep our hall a safe and available meeting place for all our community members.

Thank you for your consideration and support of the Yaak Community and Yaak Community

Hall.

Sincerely,

Craig Johnson

406-295-7277

January 14, 2025

Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Long Range Planning (F)
Representative John Fitzpatrick, Chair
Senator John Esp, Vice Chair
Senator Ellie Boldman
Representative Scott Rosenzweig
Representative Paul Tuss
Representative Mike Vinton

RE: HB12 – Montana Historic Preservation Grant: Yaak Community Hall

Good Morning Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Robyn King and I am a 40-year resident of the Yaak Valley, serve on the Yaak Community Hall Board, and chair our project's fundraising committee. The Community Hall has been an integral part of the fabric of our community life since 1925, serving as a place for events and celebrations; a place to gather our remote residents for emergency wildfire updates, first aid trainings, informational meetings, and for candidate forums during election season; a place that provides essential services like a local food bank and space for educational and social services. The entire building is open and accessible to the general public during events, meetings, for rental space, and other activities.

Our project addresses critical infrastructure repairs, ensuring the Hall remains a safe and functional space. The floor is bowing due to the lack of support to the exterior logs and underneath the floor. Once floor and foundation renovations are complete, the Yaak Community Hall will not only be used for activities mentioned previously, but also provide space for health screening and local care for our elders and young children; space for local yoga classes and other health and wellness activities; and a satellite location for adult education classes. We look forward to utilizing the Hall for another 100 years.

Since submitting the grant proposal, the fundraising committee has secured matching contributions needed for the project. **To date, the Yaak Community has raised $37,000 in cash and committed volunteer contributions!** We will secure a cultural resources contractor and work with Lincoln County to secure an asbestos inspection, to be completed by March. We are committed to raising the remaining matching funds in the next few months. The fundraising committee has multiple fundraiser drives that are going and planned, including a larch cookie pledge drive, locally-made quilt raffle, and a "Love Notes to the Community Hall" video fundraising series in February with a Valentine's Day brunch fundraiser at the Hall. I am also prepared to write additional grant proposals in the spring.

The Yaak Community Hall project has brought our community together – celebrating our vibrant community connections and camaraderie. It has been inspiring and uplifting to be a part of this effort, and we are confident that we will get this project off the ground in time for the Hall's 100th birthday on July 4th! Thank you for your consideration and time.

Sincerely,

Robyn King
240 Birch Lane
Troy, MT 59935
406-249-5694