Noel Bonam  
AARP Maine State Director  
53 Baxter Boulevard  
Portland, ME 04101  

October 20, 2021  

Dear Mr. Bonam:  

The Select Board of Town of Porter, Maine is pleased to submit this letter of support for our local Grateful Undead which seeks affiliation with the AARP/World Health Organization Network of Age Friendly Communities. Porter recognizes the importance of encouraging and promoting age-friendly planning and policies to address our changing demographics to enhance independent living for our older residents. We are committed to continually improving our town’s support of residents who seek to remain active and healthy as they age in our town.  

Older residents of our area came together over a decade ago forming a volunteer group known as the Grateful Undead to identify and address issues of concern as we all age in our community. Since they began, their effort has been to support the health and well-being of our town’s many senior residents. In their own words, the activities of the Grateful Undead include:  

- In coordination with Sacopee Valley Health Center, we developed a network of volunteer transporters who drive older residents who have no other source of transportation to and from medical and other important appointments.  
- We completed a six town survey in 2017 that included the towns in the Sacopee Valley area as well as Newfield, to help identify issues that older residents feel are most important to help them stay in their homes. Feeling safe in their homes and on the streets in their community was a point of concern for responders to the survey.  
- In 2018-2019 we researched and distributed 1500 local Resource Guides for local seniors which was eye-catching and full of information about local as well as regional and state services with contact information.  
- We had a Handy Helper program that matched handy folks in the community with elders who had repair needs in their homes in order to make them safe and habitable. That program has been on hold during the pandemic, but we hope to have it activated again soon.  
- We created a phone buddy system in 2018 that matched isolated seniors with volunteers from the group; this connection continues years later for many buddy pairs, and we are now working on a wellness check call service to keep in touch with at risk elders to assure that they stay safe and well in their homes.
• We have created a Wednesday Walkers group which meets to walk for an hour or longer either on local easy trails or on the flat track at the Cornish Fairgrounds.

• We have created a committee called Senior Central which is trying to find ways to bring interesting events to the area for older residents. We have offered 3 Adult Education workshops for the fall of 2021, and hope to add more in the future.

• The Senior Central committee recently held a very well attended Senior Conversation in Cornish at which 25 older residents came out to discuss improving recreational, educational and social opportunities available in our Sacopee Valley Area.

The Town of Porter Select Board joins other towns in the Sacopee Valley to offer support and commitment to the effort of the Grateful Undead and AARP's Age-Friendly Communities to ensure that our community becomes ever-more friendly to its aging residents.

Sincerely,

Brent Day, Chair of the Select Board of the Town of Porter

10/20/2021