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Jeffrey Walker, Executive Director
SRPEDD
88 Broadway
Taunton, MA 02780

RE: SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARD

Dear Mr. Walker,

I am writing to support the nomination of Marion Planning Board member Jennifer Francis for the SRPEDD Special Recognition Award. It is a great honor and privilege to do so.

Jennifer is an outstanding professional, colleague and active member of the community, but she should be viewed first as an exceptional leader. She is and has been a leader on the Marion Planning Board, the Marion Energy Management Committee and in the community for a long time. Since I have known Jennifer, she has been a proponent of green energy to mitigate climate change and to reduce the release of greenhouse gas emissions that are warming our planet. She has led on mitigation strategies that include, but are not limited to, energy assessments for Marion's public buildings, advocating for retrofitting buildings to make them more energy efficient, advocating for and adopting renewable energy sources like solar and wind and helping Marion develop a more sustainable transport system for Town employees by initiating the fleet of electric vehicles used by Town employees.

She is an extraordinary role model too. Solar panels cover the roof of Jennifer's home, the family car is a hybrid, and her home has a geothermal heating and cooling system that further reduces greenhouse gas emissions. Indeed, I know several members of the community who have installed roof solar systems because of the example set by Jennifer.

While she has advocated for widespread green energy use to mitigate climate change and its impact, she has taken it a step further providing educational programs to all age groups from elementary school children to adult civic groups in the SouthCoast community and beyond. In June 2016, a capacity crowd at the Beverly Yacht Club listened as Jennifer and UMass Dartmouth Associate Professor Chad McGuire presented an authoritative program regarding coastal areas and the challenge of an increasing population that puts more people and more assets in harm's way from an increased potential for flooding. According to Jennifer, the stakes are high.

During the Town's Master Plan process, Jennifer provided well thought-out suggestions and proposals when considering all elements of the Master Plan. Jennifer attended the preliminary phases of the project, and she worked diligently on all segments leading up to the finished product. Jennifer initiated the Traffic and Circulation Task Force in Marion as part of a Complete Streets program that will enable safe access for all users: pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists. Complete Streets will make it easy and safe to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to work. Also, Jennifer is in the process of establishing a Master Plan Implementation Committee with key people who will set goals/objectives and prioritize, monitor and review progress on potential projects identified in the implementation section of Marion's Master Plan.

Finally, I must comment on Jennifer as a colleague on the Planning Board and the Energy Management Committee. There are many people like me who have had our projects, boards and committees supported by Jennifer. She is a wise counselor with the highest integrity and civility; Jennifer is highly respected in her field and in the SouthCoast region and beyond.

I know of no one more deserving for this Special Recognition Award. I would be happy to answer any questions. Thank you.

Eileen J. Marum

Chairman, Marion Planning Board