



Janet T. Mills
GOVERNOR

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04333-0001

November 28, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg, Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

It is with great pleasure that I submit to you the following letter in support of the Maine Department of Transportation's (MaineDOT) application for funding through the FY 2022 Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Grant program.

The *Maine Woods to Water Rail Connection Project* proposes rehabilitating existing dormant railroad track in order to augment efficiency for customers at a new sustainable industrial park in Millinocket. The project builds upon previous rail investments in the area and will create economic opportunity in a region negatively impacted by the closure of the Great Northern Paper Mill in 2014.

MaineDOT's project proposes the construction of a "loop track" which will be used to service the growing industrial park at the old mill location. The *One North* industrial park requires rail service to connect tenants to global markets. One such tenant, Highland Carbon Solutions LLC, is a sustainable wood pellet manufacturer and will require efficient rail service to ship their product to the port at Mack Point in Searsport for global distribution. This project will improve capacity and reliability in the rail corridor between Millinocket and Searsport and additionally will make improvements to the rail infrastructure at Mack Point terminal.

This project will help attract family-wage jobs in an economically disadvantaged area. I am pleased to see that MaineDOT has made this project a priority and has plans to invest in the Millinocket region. I urge you to support MaineDOT's request for funding through CRISI, as these funds will greatly impact this region of Maine and its residents.

Sincerely,



Janet T. Mills
Governor



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