

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20510

June 24, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary of Transportation  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

We write in support of the application submitted by the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) to the U.S. Department of Transportation's Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant program. MDOT's \$84.3 million *Presque Isle Freight and Mobility Priority Corridor Project* will create a roadway bypass in Aroostook County to provide an expedited route for trucking and facilitate a safer downtown Presque Isle, Maine.

Aroostook County is Maine's northernmost county, covering over 6,000 square miles. The nation's largest county east of the Mississippi River, Aroostook County is larger than Connecticut and Rhode Island combined. The main thoroughfare through Aroostook County is U.S. Route 1, which connects local residents to critical services such as health care and educational opportunities, and businesses to key markets. U.S. Route 1 traverses through downtown Presque Isle, and is currently the only trucking route into northern Aroostook County. The traffic in downtown Presque Isle creates greater emissions, deterioration of existing infrastructure, and pedestrian and motorist safety concerns.

To relieve congestion in downtown Presque Isle, MDOT proposes to construct a much needed bypass for commercial traffic. MDOT's request of \$44.1 million is matched with \$37.5 million in federal and state funding and builds upon a Congressionally Directed Spending request I secured for planning and design in the fiscal year 2022 Consolidated Appropriations Act. This project has the full support of local stakeholders as well, with the Presque Isle City Council voting unanimously to endorse the project.

The proposed two-lane bypass will provide numerous benefits for local residents and commercial traffic traveling through the region. The investment is part of a downtown revitalization movement in Presque Isle to return the city center to a safe, village atmosphere for businesses and community services. This project would decrease congestion and transit time for northern Maine freight and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the city. A strong infrastructure network is critical for economic revitalization in this area of rural Maine, which has been designated by the Northern Border Regional Commission as "economically distressed."

We urge your careful consideration of this proposal, in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations, and ask that you please notify us directly or your staff notify Trevor Hustus (Collins) at (202) 224-1533 and Barbara Hayslett (Golden) at (207) 492-6009 when a final decision has been made.

Sincerely,



Susan M. Collins  
United States Senator



Jared F. Golden  
Member of Congress