



Janet T. Mills
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
1 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0001

August 17, 2023

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

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I write today in strong support for the Maine Department of Transportation's Rural Surface Transportation Grant application through the U.S. Department of Transportation. MaineDOT is seeking \$27.6 million in discretionary grant funding to assist with a rehabilitation project that targets a section of U.S. Route 1 which is valued at nearly \$38 million.

MaineDOT's *Northern Maine U.S. 1 Road Improvement Project* makes needed improvements to U.S. Route 1 in Frenchville, Maine. Frenchville is located in Aroostook County, Maine's most expansive and rural county. These improvements will repair two substandard sections of Route 1, totaling 10.4 miles. Over the past 25 years much of Route 1, within Aroostook County, has undergone full modernization. Only four sections remain uncompleted, and this project proposes to complete two of those remaining sections.

This highway is vital to the livelihoods of the citizens in northern Maine. It connects residents to employment, medical care, and life sustaining goods. Uniquely positioned along the US/Canadian border, it is not unusual for some relatives to live in Frenchville while others reside across the border in Canada. US Route 1 connects these families and serves as the major highway for exporting Maine goods.

The State of Maine has unique infrastructure challenges due to its geography, weather, and population density. Maine is one of the most rural states in the country making reliable infrastructure critical to everyday life and remaining competitive in a global economy. I am pleased that MaineDOT is seeking assistance from the US Department of Transportation to make these investments. The declining condition of this important piece of infrastructure increases risk to the quality of life for residents. This project proposes the necessary improvements to ensure that the residents of Frenchville and the surrounding communities will maintain continued access to the services they need.

I respectfully request that you please consider funding this project fully through the Rural Surface Transportation program. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or MaineDOT Commissioner Bruce Van Note.

Sincerely,

Janet T. Mills
Governor



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