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May 3, 2024

The Honorable Amit Bose, Administrator
Federal Railroad Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

SUBJECT: Support for *Driving Maine's Rural Economy through Freight Rail Efficiency* CRISI 2024 Grant

Dear Administrator Bose,

I am writing in support of the Maine Department of Transportation's *Driving Maine's Rural Economy through Freight Rail Efficiency Project* application for a 2024 Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Grant.

The application outlines MainedOT's important plans to administer needed improvements to the Eastern Maine Railway (EMR) line through Maine via the Project. Rail improvements consist of replacing worn-out and obsolete rail, crossties, and turnouts with modern and reliable rail infrastructure along 130 miles of rail line. The Project will do all of the following:

1. Replace key rail infrastructure in eastern Maine, improving reliability in the supply chain
2. Connect the state's forest products industry to export markets
3. Support the creation of new businesses and family-wage jobs in rural communities
4. Reduce transportation costs and greenhouse gas emissions
5. Decrease truck traffic and crashes on rural roadways
6. Improve Maine and U.S. competitiveness in the global marketplace

The project includes rehabilitation of tracks that are crucial to our business model. This line allows us to interconnect with the CSX line in Mattawamkeag, ME and the CPKCS line in Brownville, ME. These lines serve our other divisions and customers throughout the United States.

With the implementation of this public-private partnership we can improve existing business operations and position our region for new and sustainable industries. We respectfully request FRA give favorable consideration to the *Driving Maine's Rural Economy through Freight Rail Efficiency Project*.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nathan Whitney', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Nathan Whitney
Plant Manager, LP Houlton