



Natural Resources Council of Maine

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August 25, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

SUBJECT: Letter of Support for the Federal Transit Administration FY2022 Electric or Low-Emitting Ferry Pilot Program

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

The Natural Resources Council of Maine is pleased to express our strong support of the Maine State Department of Transportation's (MaineDOT) submission for the FY2022 Electric or Low-Emitting Ferry Pilot Program for funding to construct an electric or hybrid replacement ferry for the *Margaret Chase Smith*.

The new vessel will replace the aging *Margaret Chase Smith*, which provides vehicle and passenger ferry service between Lincolnville and Islesboro, Maine State Ferry System's (MSFS) most-traveled route. As the only means of public transportation to and from Islesboro, and the only way for vehicles to travel on and off Islesboro, the ferry provides a crucial link for island residents and visitors. The island depends on reliable, sustainable ferry service for access to jobs and services, as well as for emergency medical transport. Replacement of the current vessel is key to maintaining safe, reliable ferry service to Islesboro.

The new vessel will be designed with electric or hybrid propulsion, based upon public input and in alignment with the state's electric vehicle and transportation emissions-reduction goals. Our organization is particularly interested in the proposal due to the need for economy-wide electrification in the coming years. Approximately half of our state's emissions come from the transportation sector, and electrifying all forms of transportation will be critical to meeting Maine's climate goals.

The Natural Resources Council of Maine supports and encourages MaineDOT's proposal for the Electric or Low-Emitting Ferry Pilot Program. Funding this project would allow for construction of a new vessel that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve ferry service, and provide greater public access to work, education, and services through safe, reliable, and economical public transportation.

Sincerely,

Jack Shapiro
Climate and Clean Energy Director
Natural Resources Council of Maine

Protecting the Nature of Maine

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