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July 1, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg, Secretary
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am writing in support of the Maine Department of Transportation's (MaineDOT) application for the U.S. Department of Transportation's FY24 Ferry Service for Rural Communities Grant Program. MaineDOT's proposed project would modernize two aging ferry terminals that connect the year-round island community of Islesboro, Maine, to the mainland.

MaineDOT's project would enhance the capacity of the existing terminals to accommodate a new plug-in hybrid ferry, which is expected to be delivered in 2028. Thirty-seven feet longer than its predecessor, the new ferry will be able to transport 10 additional vehicles, addressing the growing demand for this essential service. Furthermore, the project makes the necessary upgrades to the electrical infrastructure at the terminals to allow high-speed charging for the new ferry. This vessel will primarily operate on battery power, supported by a diesel backup system.

The current ferry terminals, constructed in 1959, are at the end of their service life. It is imperative that MaineDOT continue to provide safe, reliable transportation for residents of Islesboro, as well as people from Lincolnville and the surrounding communities who travel to the island yearly. Maine DOT believes that the proposed investment would not only support modernization efforts, but also contribute to the economic development, tourism, and overall connectivity of the region. With this in mind, thank you for your consideration of Maine DOT's application, consistent with applicable laws, rules, and regulations. Please notify Deidre Grant at (207) 945-0417 when a decision has been made.

Sincerely,



Susan M. Collins
United States Senator