

## Board of Directors

Tom Michaud  
**Chair**  
Sunrise Opportunities

Kay Kimball  
**Vice Chair**  
University of Maine System

Lucas Morris  
**Treasurer**  
Machias Savings Bank

Scott Beal  
Woodland Pulp

Mike Sansing  
Bar Harbor Foods

Dan Qualls  
University of Maine at  
Machias

Susan Mingo  
Washington County  
Community College

Brian Frutchey  
RH Foster, Inc.

Ardis Brown  
Town of Danforth

Megan Sorby  
Kingfish Maine

Dee Sabattus  
United South and Eastern  
Tribes

### *Ex-Officio*

Betsy Fitzgerald  
**Secretary**  
Washington County  
Commissioners

Representative Will Tuell  
Washington County  
Legislative Delegation



July 25, 2022

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

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

Sunrise County Economic Council supports the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) Bridge Investment Program Planning Grant Application for the development of the MaineDOT Off-System Bridge Investment Program. MaineDOT's initiative will create a planning process that evaluates off-system bridge replacements through careful consideration of local, regional, and statewide criteria.

Funding this proposal will enable MaineDOT to invest in critical bridge connections to underserved rural communities while establishing consistent criteria in coordination with communities, construction experts, and resource agencies that improves efficiency, innovation, and habitat protection.

Bridge structures are in some cases the only way to access our rural municipalities and therefore are the economic and community lifeline of their respective regions. Every improvement to these poor and critical condition structures provides significant support to maintain essential connections to move goods, services, and people across safer and infrastructure that is more resilient to change, such as climate conditions and increases in commercial trucking, residency, tourism, and workforce commuting.

Bridge improvement projects garner strong local and regional support, and your help in making it possible will strengthen what MaineDOT has identified as a priority and significant need. Sunrise County Economic Council hopes the USDOT will make a grant award to the MaineDOT to further strengthen the impact of decades of significant state and local investments through this important initiative. We thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Charles Rudelitch, Executive Director  
Sunrise County Economic Council