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United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510–1904

August 3, 2023

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

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I write in support of the application submitted by the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) to the U.S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT) Ferry Service for Rural Communities Grant Program. MaineDOT requests federal support to modernize two aging ferry terminals that are crucial to connect the year-round island community of Islesboro, Maine, to the mainland.

MaineDOT currently operates the ferry terminals which were constructed in 1959, and are reaching the end of their service life. Each year, the ferry carries more than 80,000 vehicles and 180,000 passengers to and from the Islesboro community, a group of islands housing 600 year-round residents and more than 2,000 in the summer.

Replacing these ferry terminals will accommodate a new plug-in hybrid ferry that is 37 feet greater in length than its predecessor, allowing it to transport an additional 10 vehicles each crossing. Additionally, this project will upgrade the electrical infrastructure at the terminals, enabling high-speed charging for the new ferry's battery system. Updated ferry terminals will ensure safe and reliable transportation service while contributing to the economic development, tourism, and connectivity of the Islesboro community.

Thank you for your time and effort on behalf of MaineDOT. I urge your careful consideration of this application, in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations, and ask that you please notify me, or your staff notify Jordan Lawlor at (202) 224-2523, when a final decision has been made.

Sincerely,

Susan M. Collins
United States Senator