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August 4, 2022

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 FY2022 Bridge Investment Program (BIP). MaineDOT seeks \$480,000, which would be matched with an additional \$120,000 from the State Highway Fund, to create an Off-System Bridge Investment Program.

MaineDOT's Off-System Bridge Investment Program will be utilized to prioritize the backlog of 239 off-system bridges within its inventory that are listed in poor or critical condition. These bridges are primarily located in underserved, rural communities with limited resources. These critical links facilitate the movement of people and goods throughout Maine, connecting them to markets, employment, health care, and other services. Over a quarter of the 239 backlogged bridges have a detour length of more than 100 miles, further necessitating the need for a strong review and rehabilitation program. This rigorous prioritization process will help MaineDOT identify bridge bundles for replacement or rehabilitation, which MaineDOT intends to pursue with competitive funding through the BIP in future years.

Thank you for your time and effort on behalf of the Maine Department of Transportation. I urge your careful consideration of its application, in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations, and ask that you please notify me or have your staff notify Trevor Hustus at (202) 224-1533 when a final decision has been made.

Sincerely,



Susan M. Collins
United States Senator