



City of Caribou, Maine

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August 16th, 2010

David A. Cole, Commissioner
Maine Department of Transportation
16 State House Station
August, Maine 04333

Dear Commissioner Cole,

The City of Caribou is sending this communication to express concerns pertaining to the pending abandonment of over 233 miles of the Montreal Maine & Atlantic rail line connecting all of Northern Maine to the entire United States rail system as well as the Canadian rail systems. The loss of rail connectivity for our region, a region of the State without a Federal Highway system, would be devastating.

The City of Caribou is of the understanding that applications for funding are to be made to upgrade the existing rail system as well as for future planning to best utilize this vital commerce corridor. The City of Caribou supports the application for such funding as essential to our region's long term ability to compete in the global market.

Businesses within the City of Caribou rely upon rail service for the cost effective transportation of goods and services into Aroostook County and to export our natural resource based goods as well as manufactured goods to markets in the U.S. and Canada. The import of home heating fuels by rail is essential within a region heavily dependent upon the same to survive the extended winter season.

The City has been working with Maine Bio Fuels towards the re-development of a 35 acre past industrial site as a bio-fuel refinery. Rail is essential to cost effectively import feed stocks to be refined into bio-fuels specifically to meet our home heating fuel needs, lowering our dependency on foreign petroleum products. As a region, we spend more than twice the U.S. average per capita to heat our homes. Cost effective delivery of products is essential to lessen these impacts.

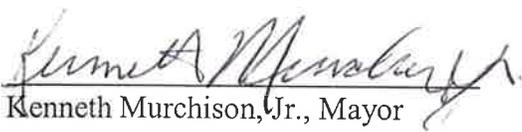
The Northern Region of Maine is also well positioned to expand its agricultural and forestry based economies as a producer of biomass fuels, both wood and grasses. Rail service will be crucial to cost effectively transport the products of this emerging industry.

Northern Maine further relies upon the existing rail system for the transport of goods and services as the interstate highway system ends in Houlton Maine. Truck transport of goods is more expensive over the interstate system. It is even more expensive when the interstate system does not even reach your region. The localized impacts of the increased shipping of freight by heavy trucks over our local roads will only serve to further exacerbate the economic disparages that currently exist in Northern Maine as compared to State and National averages. The current cost to both transport goods as well as to commute should be

examined and compared for our region when considering the merits of appropriating funds to save and improve our rail services.

Please accept this letter as a record of support from the City of Caribou for future applications of funding for both the Aroostook Rail Preservation & Rehabilitation Project and the Aroostook County Rail Corridor Planning & Development. Rail was essential in building our Region, in exporting the natural resourced based goods extracted within our Region, and will continue to be essential to ensure our Region's ability to compete in a global economy not tolerant of prohibitive operational expense. Our support for the request of funding is to ensure our future presence in an ever unyielding competitive environment.

Signed this 16th day of August, 2010 by the Caribou City Council,


Kenneth Murchison, Jr., Mayor


Karla Bell, Deputy Mayor


David Martin, Councilor

Mark Goughan, Councilor


Mary Kate Barbosa, Councilor


Christopher Bell, Councilor


John Boone, Councilor