

Appendix E

Letters of Support



Janet T. Mills
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
1 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0001

February 14, 2020

Secretary Elaine Chao
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao,

I'm writing to express my support for the Maine Department of Transportation's application to the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) 2020 grant program. If awarded, this grant would strengthen Maine's freight network by funding a significant part of our state's effort to replace eight bridges and make key safety improvements to one intersection.

Maine is facing unique challenges. We have one of the oldest populations in the nation, and that population is spread out over a rural landscape unlike that of any other east coast state. This dynamic makes it difficult to build and maintain a vibrant economy – especially away from our urban centers. Our transportation infrastructure is crucial to our efforts to create new economic opportunities.

The bridges MaineDOT is seeking to replace are in rural areas and near qualified opportunity zones. Each of the nine projects is either on the National Highway System or Critical Urban Freight Corridor on the National Freight Network. Maine's freight assets are an integral part of our state's economic vitality. Our network of roads, bridges, and ports supports the movement of approximately 100 million tons of freight annually worth an estimated \$100 billion. Raw goods travel from our coastline and forests, and finished products return to store shelves and doorsteps.

The hardworking men and women at MaineDOT have proven themselves to be excellent stewards of public funds. They maximize every precious dollar in order to ensure the safety of the traveling public and the reliability of Maine's vast network of infrastructure. I hope you will consider our state's application favorably.

Sincerely,

Janet T. Mills
Governor



PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER



**3 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0003**

February 14, 2020

Hon. Elaine L. Chao, Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

We are writing to express our strong support for the Maine Department of Transportation's application for an Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant. If awarded, this funding will greatly help MaineDOT ensure the safety of critical pieces of infrastructure by replacing eight bridges across the state of Maine (at least one in each of our legislative districts) and performing one Highway Safety and Intersection Improvement project.

The nine identified projects are critical to maintaining the state's highway freight corridor; they are all either on the National Highway System or part of the Critical Urban Freight Corridor on the National Highway Freight Network. This freight corridor supports the majority of the freight shipments into, out of, and within Maine.

If the deteriorating condition of these bridges reaches the point that MaineDOT must close any one of them to traffic, it will prove detrimental to drivers, and the local economy will suffer tremendously. As state policy makers, we understand the importance of the transportation system. Bridges maintain the connection to our communities. Loss of a bridge often means loss of the entire transportation corridor. The detour routes of these bridges vary, with the longest being greater than 100 miles. Each of these structures sees a considerable number of motorists daily, with the average daily traffic count ranging from 4,081 to 25,340 vehicles per day.

Through this INFRA grant application, MaineDOT is seeking \$41.7 million (or 60 percent) in federal funding to be matched by \$27.8 million (or 40 percent) in state and other funding for an overall total project cost of \$69.6 million.

We thank you for taking the time to consider MaineDOT's application. We hope you will respond favorably by awarding MaineDOT the funding it is requesting.

Sincerely,



Scott Cyrway
State Senator



Brad Farrin
State Senator



Lisa Keim
State Senator



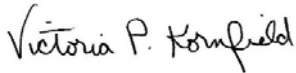
Geoffrey Gratwick
State Senator



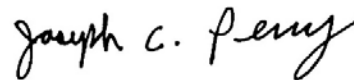
James Dill
State Senator



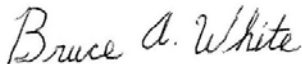
Michelle Dunphy
State Representative



Victoria Kornfield
State Representative



Joseph Perry
State Representative



Bruce White
State Representative



DEPARTMENT OF ENGINEERING

CITY OF BANGOR

JOHN THERIAULT PE, PTOE
CITY ENGINEER

February 14, 2020

Honorable Elaine L. Chao, Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Re: MaineDOT 2020 INFRA Grant Application – Two Bridges on Stillwater Avenue, Old Town
and the I-95 Bridge Over Broadway (Route 15), Bangor

Dear Secretary Chao:

I am writing to you on behalf of the City of Bangor, Maine to express the City's support for the Maine Department of Transportation's INFRA Grant application to obtain funding for major bridge projects in Old Town and Bangor, Maine.

The replacement of the two bridges on Stillwater Avenue in Old Town is a very important project for the northern region of Maine. Stillwater Avenue is a major arterial that provides interstate access to the businesses and commercial retail for both Orono and Old Town. Orono is home to the University of Maine and Old Town is home to several large employers including the Old Town Mill, Old Town Canoe, and the James W. Sewall Company. Having worked in Old Town several years prior to my employment with the City of Bangor, I am quite familiar with the traffic congestion associated with the narrow bridge width and the poor pavement conditions of the two bridges that span the Stillwater River.

The replacement of the I-95 Bridge over Broadway is essential to the prosperity of Bangor. The City of Bangor is the service center for all of Northern Maine providing employment, medical and social services, and a wide variety of commercial, retail, and professional services for the region. Interstate 95 is the major transportation corridor that connects Bangor to northern and southern Maine. Broadway (Route 15) experiences the highest traffic volumes of all of the arterials within Bangor providing access to two hospitals, shopping centers, and the residential communities to the west. Maintaining unimpeded travel on both I-95 and Broadway within Bangor is vital to the economic health and wellbeing of our City.

Because of the importance of these discussed projects, the City of Bangor whole heartedly supports MaineDOT's 2020 INFRA Grant application and hopes that you will consider these projects worthy of Funding.

Sincerely,

John Theriault, PE
Bangor City Engineer



OFFICE OF THE TOWN MANAGER

145 Congress Street
Rumford, Maine 04276
(207) 364-4576 Ext. 212
(207) 364-5642 FAX
town@rumfordme.org

Haley Jaramillo
Maine DOT
16 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Haley,

Please accept the following letter of support from the Town of Rumford for the Maine Department of Transportation's application to the United States Department of Transportation's Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant program.

The identified bridges in Rumford are part of our critical economic infrastructure. Well in excess of 50% of our regional economic output travels over the bridge at Rumford Point. Maintaining a state of good repair for these bridges is essential to the health of ND Paper's Rumford Mill and to the viability of employment for residents who work at Sunday River Ski Resort in Newry.

The Town hopes for a successful outcome for the Maine DOT on this application and appreciates your hard work in helping to secure the wellbeing of our economy.

Sincerely,


Stacy Carter

Town Manager
Town of Rumford
Maine

TOWN OF SOLON

PO BOX 214 • SOLON, MAINE • 04979

PHONE: 207-643-2541 • FAX: 207-643-2864

townofsolon@yahoo.com

www.solon.maine.gov

SELECTMEN/ASSESSORS MEETING/OFFICE HOURS
WEDNESDAY 7:30AM TO 12PM, 1PM TO 4PM & 6PM TO 7:45PM

February 5, 2020

The Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary of U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

Please accept this letter in strong support of the Maine Department of Transportation's (MaineDOT) Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant application.

As you are aware, the State of Maine has unique infrastructure challenges due to its geography, weather, and low population density throughout much of the state. Much of Maine is comprised of vast forest land, making it one of the most rural states in the country. The state's rural nature makes reliable and safe infrastructure critical for U.S. businesses in the region, as well as employment and mobility.

This INFRA grant award would allow the replacement of eight bridges and one highway safety and intersection improvements project. The project included in the application are critical to maintaining the state's highway freights corridors, which supports the majority of the state's freight shipments (including forest products, and other heavy bulk commodities) into, out of, and within the State.

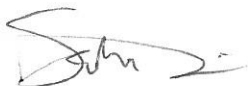
One of the eight bridges (#2504) is located in Solon, Maine on Route 201, the major connector for Somerset County, especially the towns of Skowhegan and Madison. In addition to serving local communities, the corridor is a major route for Maine's international border with Canada, as well as being designated as a National Scenic Byway - Old Canada Road. This corridor provides a reliable and safe route for freight, local transportation, international transportation, tourism, etc. For the towns north of Solon to the Canadian border, it is the only major road available to reach Skowhegan and the U. S. Route 95 entrance in Fairfield. Through this INFRA grant, constructing these projects would allow freight corridors, businesses, and residents to have modern transportations infrastructure that others take for granted. If these projects do not occur, the region will experience a continued decline in financial opportunities, as well as disadvantages to Maine resident's way of life.

We are pleased that MaineDOT is seeking assistance from the U.S. Department of Transportation to replace the identified bridges and intersection. We strongly believe that this region of the country cannot be competitive on a regional, national, or global scale, if these improvement to the highway system are not replace. We thank you for your careful review of this application, and respectfully request that you consider fully funding this Project in this round of INFRA grant award.

Sincerely,



Elaine Aloes, Chair of Selectmen



Sarah Davis, Vice Chair of Selectmen



Office of the
City Engineer

February 6, 2020

Hon. Elaine L. Chao, Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

I write in support of the Maine Department of Transportation's INFRA 2020 grant proposal, focused on bridge replacements and intersection improvements on the national freight network. In Maine, more than three quarters of freight shipments move by truck, so these infrastructure improvements are critical investments.

In particular, I would like to highlight the Webb Road highway bridges on Rt. I-95 in Waterville, Maine which are slated for replacement under this grant. Route I-95 is Maine's central artery, connecting Maine to Canada and the eastern US. Its presence supports almost all economic activity in central Maine. I-95 has helped spur the revival of downtown Waterville and the City's six percent population increase over the past decade. I-95 has made possible the creation of FirstPark, a regional business park adjacent to I-95 and a partnership of twenty municipalities. While easy to overlook, I-95 and its bridges and interchanges are essential to life and work in Maine and must be maintained.

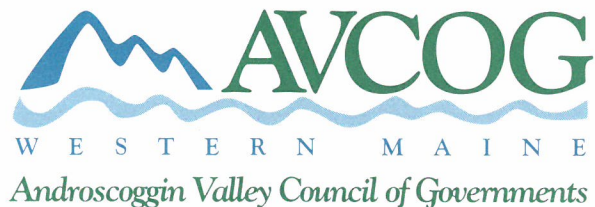
I look forward to U.S. DOT's support of this essential transportation development initiative in 2020, Maine's bicentennial year.

Sincerely,

Andrew J. McPherson, P.E.
City Engineer
City of Waterville



City Hall, 1 Common Street, Waterville, ME 04901-6699
Phone: (207) 680-4232 | Fax: (207) 680-4234
nchampaane@waterville-me.aov



February 4, 2020

Bruce Van Note, Commissioner
Maine Department of Transportation
16 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0016

Dear Commissioner Van Note,

The Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments (AVCOG) is pleased to submit this letter of support for the Maine Department of Transportation's INFRA grant application for the replacement of eight bridges and safety improvements at one intersection. Two of the bridges included in this application are located on U.S. Route 2 in Rumford, which is located in the AVCOG region.

The proposed replacement of the Martins Stream Bridge (#2514) over the Ellis River and the Red Bridge (#2707) over the Swift River is consistent with AVCOG's *2015 Regional Transportation Strategic Investments*, which identifies the need to upgrade Route 2 to current federal standards. These bridge replacement projects are also consistent with AVCOG's *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy*, which specifies that we need to "develop a cost-effective, environmentally sound, multi-modal transportation network to serve the region and link it to the vital national transportation network".

Route 2 is a critical highway for the AVCOG region, as well as for the State of Maine and the northern New England region. Route 2 is a principal route for the movement of freight, recreational traffic to the region's four-season recreation areas, and commuter traffic.

Natural resource-based industries, such as the paper mill in Rumford, rely on Route 2 for the movement of raw and finished products. The tourist industry brings an influx of various travel modes ranging from bicycles to cars to tour buses. Among the largest 10 employers in Oxford County in the second quarter of 2019, seven are located on, or in the immediate vicinity of Route 2. Infrastructure improvements such as those proposed in this INFRA grant application are extremely important to the region's economy and will improve the safety of the traveling public.

Sincerely,

Jennifer L. Williams, P.E.
Transportation Director



KENNEBEC VALLEY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

February 7th, 2020

The Honorable Elaine Chao

Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE

Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

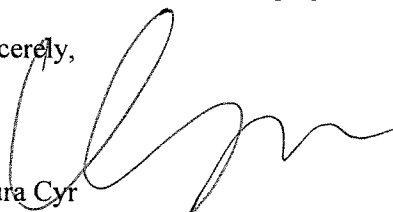
Please accept this letter in strong support of the Maine Department of Transportation's (MaineDOT) Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant application.

As you are aware, the State of Maine has unique infrastructure challenges due to its geography, weather, and low population density. Much of Maine is comprised of vast forest land, making it one of the most rural states in the country. This rural nature makes reliable and safe infrastructure a crucial component for U.S. businesses, employment and mobility across the region. This INFRA grant award would allow the replacement of eight bridges and one highway safety and intersection improvements project. These projects are critical to maintaining the state's highway freight corridors (into, out of, and within the state) which support the majority of the state's freight shipments (including forest products and other heavy bulk commodities).

KVCOG represents a rural region in an already rural state and this INFRA grant would replace three local bridges (Bridge #'s: 1461, 5813 and 2504) which would allow businesses, residents and tourists to have modern transportation infrastructure that others, in more populous regions, take for granted. Bridge #2504, in Solon, is an integral part of the US Route 201 transportation corridor. US Route 201 is the main network in Somerset County and any failure of this network would have major impacts on the area's economic and social well-being. Bridge's 1461 and 5813 in Waterville are located on Interstate 95. Interstate 95's importance on the region, state, and nation can't be overstated. If these projects do not occur, the region will experience a decline in financial opportunity, drastically reducing Maine residents' way of life. For these reasons, and many more, we at KVCOG fully support MaineDOT's INFRA grant application.

We are pleased that MaineDOT is seeking assistance from the U.S. Department of Transportation to replace the identified bridges and intersection. We strongly believe that this region of the country cannot be competitive on a regional, national, or global scale, if these improvements to the highway system are not funded. We thank you for your careful review of this application, and respectfully request that you consider fully funding this project in this round of INFRA grant award.

Sincerely,



Laura Cyr

Executive Director

Kennebec Valley Council of Governments

MAINE MOTOR TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION

142 Whitten Road

P.O. Box 857

Augusta, Maine 04332-0857

(207) 623-4128 • FAX (207) 623-4096 • www.mmta.com

"The spokesman for the Maine Trucking Industry"

February 11, 2020

Honorable Elaine L. Chao, Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Chao,

I am writing to offer Maine Motor Transport Association's support for the Maine Department of Transportation's effort to secure \$69 million in federal funding for bridge and intersection improvements in the Bangor, Orono and Old Town area. MMTA represents more than 1,500 member companies, whose employees make up a large portion of the 32,000 people who make their living in the trucking industry in Maine.

The projects outlined in the MeDOT's application are self-explanatory from an engineering standpoint, but our industry looks at them from a safety perspective as MMTA's primary focus is to foster and promote highway safety. The promise of long-term detours or lowered weight limits would force commercial trucks onto local roads where there would be more interactions with traffic, crosswalks, railroad crossings, pedestrians and bicycles. The highway system, with traffic flowing in the same direction at relatively the same speeds, is designed to be the safer route for commercial trucks.

Many of our members use I-95 in this area to further economic activity in and around Maine and the northeast region which is why we write to you today to offer our support. Please consider the improved safety, congestion and supply chain efficiency impacts when deciding on federal funding investments like the one outlined in the MeDOT application.

Sincerely,



Brian Parke
President and CEO
bparke@mmta.com

February 13, 2020



Ms. Haley Jaramillo
Regional Planner
Maine Department of Transportation
16 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0016

Dear Ms. Jaramillo,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input regarding the Maine Department of Transportation's application for an INFRA (Infrastructure of Rebuilding America) Grant supporting replacement of eight bridges and one intersection in rural Maine. While we appreciate the entirety of the work proposed, ND Paper has particular interest in the safety of two bridges in Oxford County – one in Rumford and another in Mexico. ND Paper, our employees, and our business partners rely on the integrity of these structures each and every day to sustain the ongoing continuity of mill operations.

As you may be aware, ND Paper is a large North American manufacturer of pulp & paper products, operating four facilities in North America with 1.2 million metric tons of annual production capacity. Our mills in Rumford, Maine and Biron, Wisconsin are integrated paper & pulp facilities, and our mill in Fairmont, West Virginia is one of only three in the world that produces air-dried, recycled pulp. Our fourth mill, in Old Town, Maine, produces softwood kraft pulp. Residents of Maine comprise the largest portion of our 1,400-strong employee population, with about 670 working in Rumford and 130 in Old Town.

Martin's Bridge

ND Paper's Rumford Division relies heavily on truck transportation to both receive raw materials and ship finished products to customers. Martin's Bridge along Route 2 is a critical thoroughway for mill truck traffic originating from or traveling to various regions including New Hampshire, Vermont, and Canada. In any given month, approximately 2,595 trucks inbound with chemicals, chips, and logs and outbound with finished paper use that route. Considering most trucks are making a round trip to and from the mill, that totals nearly 5,200 trips across the bridge each month. Martin's Bridge is also used by about 30 employees who commute to the mill from points east of the bridge.

Red Bridge

The Red Bridge facilitates travel to and from work, as well as throughout the community, for approximately one third of our Rumford Division employees who reside in the Rumford/Mexico area. In addition, vehicle traffic to and from our Old Town mill, particularly New Hampshire and Vermont-based vendors and contractors, also crosses the Red Bridge.

Thank you for taking the time to consider the economic impact of safe travel on these bridges to ND Paper's core business.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian J. Boland".

Brian J. Boland
Vice President of Government Affairs and Corporate Initiatives
ND Paper

February 7, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in support of the Maine Department of Transportation's Infrastructure of Rebuilding America Grant application for the replacement of eight bridges and one intersection throughout rural Maine.

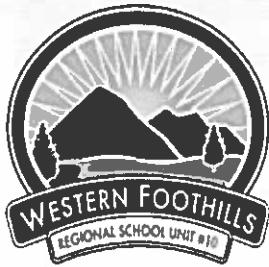
Sunday River Resort is a four-season vacation destination located in Western Maine, and is one of the largest economic drivers and employers in the region. Our business relies on employing Team Members from all around Oxford County, and bringing guests from throughout the Northeast to our resort, many of whom travel US Route 2 to get here. The replacement of the two bridges in Mexico and Rumford outlined in the Maine DOT's proposal would significantly improve the commute for our Team Members from those towns and the surrounding areas, and would surely have a positive impact on the experience for guests traveling to the resort. When our Team Members can arrive to work safely, they are able to deliver the highest quality of service to our visitors, increasing the likelihood of return visits and further economic prosperity in our region.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Dana A. Bullen II
Resort President and General Manager



**Western Foothills
Regional School Unit No. 10**
799 Hancock Street, Suite 1
Rumford ME 04276
Central Office 207-369-5560
Fax 207-562-7059

Buckfield, Hanover, Hartford, Mexico, Roxbury, Rumford, Sumner

Deborah Alden
Superintendent of Schools

Leanne Condon, Director
Curriculum, Instruction, &
Assessment

Leah Kaulback
Business Manager

February 11, 2020

RE: Letter of Support for INFRA Grant

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter of support for the bridge projects in rural Maine. Our School District, Regional School Unit No. 10 includes two of these bridges. Our staff, students and community use these bridges to move through our District on a daily basis. Since our region is centered around a major mill (Nine Dragons) we have a significant amount of heavy freight traffic in addition to our busses. Also, of significance is that Route 2 winds through our community, across these bridges, serving freight that is headed to New Hampshire and Canada from all across Maine.

Although many areas of rural Maine are seeing decreases in residence and industry, ours is not. Our student enrollment has been steady with slight increases over the last five years. We have been approved to begin exploring a new school building project. Our industries and businesses in our area are slowly growing and the mill is hiring. We need safe infrastructure to sustain our communities and keep them safe.

I whole heartedly support this grant proposal and hope that it will be seriously considered. If you have any questions please feel free to email me at dalden@rsu10.org or contact me at the above address, telephone.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Deborah A. Alden".

Deborah Alden
Superintendent of Schools