



Islesboro Economic Sustainability Corporation

P.O. Box 108
Islesboro, ME 04848
<https://www.sustain04848.com/>

August 29, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

SUBJECT: Letter of Support for the Federal Transit Administration FY2022 Ferry Service for Rural Communities Program

Dear U.S. Secretary Buttigieg:

Islesboro, Maine is a rural offshore island community of roughly 600 year-round residents served by the Maine State Ferry Service (MSFS). We are a close-knit community of fishermen, tradespeople, gardeners, contractors, caretakers, teachers, small business owners and a smattering of retirees.

The IESC is a privately funded *economic development corporation* supporting the island's essential services and businesses that we need to underpin a vital, full-time community. We support local entrepreneurs creating on-island jobs that attract new families by providing information, business expansion loans and direct investments in infrastructure projects.

We can't overemphasize how essential the MSFS vehicle and passenger ferry service is for our very existence as a community. Ours is the most-traveled MSFS route and our island's key lifeline - the only way for vehicles, goods, services, people, and emergency medical transport to travel on and off.

IESC is pleased to express our strong support of the Maine State Department of Transportation's (MaineDOT) submission for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) FY2022 Ferry Service for Rural Communities Program. This opportunity presented through FTA's Ferry Programs under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and Consolidated Appropriations Act can support this crucial transportation service for Islesboro as well as the other five island communities served by MSFS. Funding support for operating costs will help all the MSFS communities have a reliable, affordable, and sustainable ferry life-line for the years to come. These are essential to maintaining our community's vitality. Please give this MaineDOT proposal all due consideration.

Sincerely,

Roger Heinen, Chair on behalf of the IESC Board.