

Maine State Ferry Service Annual Operating Expenses Assistance
Letters of Support

1. Governor Janet T. Mills
2. Maine State Legislature
3. Town of Islesboro
4. Matinicus Isle Plantation
5. Town of Swan's Island
6. Maine State Ferry Service Advisory Board
7. Island Institute
8. Islesboro Economic Sustainability Corporation
9. Islesboro Energy Committee
10. Mill Pond Health Center (Swan's Island)
11. Swan's Island Fisherman's Co-op
12. Vinalhaven Fishermen's Co-Op
13. John H. King, Advisory Board Member and MMA Trustee

Forthcoming letters to be provided to USDOT:

Representative Pingree, Representative Golden, Senator King, and Senator Collins



Janet T. Mills
GOVERNOR

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

August 30, 2022

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

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am pleased to send you the following letter in support of the Maine Department of Transportation's (MaineDOT) application for funding through the Ferry Service for Rural Communities Program. Through their application MaineDOT is requesting \$10 million to assist with operational costs of the Maine State Ferry Service (MSFS).

The MSFS provides public transportation to the rural island communities of Frenchboro, Islesboro, Matinicus, North Haven, Swan's Island and Vinalhaven. These communities depend on reliable, affordable and sustainable ferry service for access to jobs, education and services, as well as for emergency medical transports.

Like many industries over the past couple of years, the MSFS has experienced challenges. Fuel prices, increased vessel maintenance needs due to an aging fleet and lack of crew associated with COVID-19 and the global maritime workforce shortage have led to increased operating costs and missed trips.

This funding, if awarded, would help relieve the impact of increased operating costs, support new programs aimed at recruiting and retaining vessel crews, improving communication to customers through implementation of a new communication system and on-board Wi-Fi and electronic messaging, and expansion of online vehicle reservations.

I fully support MaineDOT's application for the Rural Communities Program. This funding would enhance a crucial transportation service to the Maine island communities served by the MSFS. Please do not hesitate to contact myself, or MaineDOT Commissioner Bruce Van Note, with any questions.

Sincerely,



Janet T. Mills
Governor



PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER



August 31, 2022

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

Dear U.S. Secretary Buttigieg:

We are pleased to send you the following letter in strong support of the Maine Department of Transportation's (MaineDOT) application for the U.S. Department of Transportation's Ferry Service for Rural Communities Program. Through their application MaineDOT is requesting funding to assist with operational costs of the Maine State Ferry Service (MSFS).

The MSFS provides the primary link for passengers, vehicles, and freight to six island communities off the coast of Maine. These six islands—Frenchboro, Islesboro, Matinicus, North Haven, Swan's Island, and Vinalhaven—are rural and residents rely on ferry service for access to services, goods, and jobs on the mainland, as well as for emergency medical transport.

Like many industries over the past couple of years the MSFS has experienced challenges, including significant workforce shortages. The MSFS serves as the bridge to these island communities and residents and visitors alike depend on reliable service. The \$10 million in funding that MaineDOT is requesting would help relieve the impact of increased operating costs, as well as support new programs aimed at recruiting and retaining vessel crews to enhance ferry service.

We as legislators have the unique opportunity of representing constituents who live on an island and we understand from speaking with them how important the ferry service is to their livelihood. It is a critical lifeline to the mainland. It is for these reasons that we fully support MaineDOT and their request for funding through this discretionary grant program, and we urge you to give their application full consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact any of us with questions you might have regarding this letter or our support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chip Curry".

Chip Curry
State Senator

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nicole C. Grohoski".

Nicole C. Grohoski
State Senator



David Miramant
State Senator



Victoria W. Doudera
State Representative



Ann H. Matlack
State Representative



S. Paige Zeigler, Jr.
State Representative

TOWN OF ISLESBORO
P.O. Box 76 • 150 Main Road • Islesboro, Maine 04848
(207) 734-2253 • Fax (207) 734-8394

Janet R. Anderson
Town Manager
manager@townofislesboro.com

August 25, 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:

We, the Select Board and Town Manager of the Town of Islesboro, Maine, write in support of the Maine State Department of Transportation's (MaineDOT) submission for the FY2022 Electric or Low-Emitting Ferry Pilot Program for funding to construction a replacement for our current ferry, the *Margaret Chase Smith*.

Our town is located approximately three miles off the mid-coast of Maine. The island is fourteen miles long and is narrow and home to more than 600 full time residents. In the summer the population increases by several thousand.

We have two small grocery stores on the island, three boatyards, a community Health Center, EMS and Fire Services, a K-12 Central School, and a small assisted living facility. Our school is a "magnet" school, with mainland students attending by riding our ferry to and from the island Monday to Friday. Further information can be found on our website: www.townofislesboro.com.

During the summer, our ferry runs nine round trips a day from and to Islesboro. During the off-season there are seven round trips. Morning runs are filled with contractors and service providers, as well as USPS, UPS, local building delivery services, and, during the school year, students. Truck traffic is regular and heavy, as we have no gravel pit on the island. All our fuel comes over on the ferry. Residents of the island regularly use the ferry service for food shopping, medical appointments, medication pick up (while we have a health center we do not have a pharmacy), veterinary services, hardware and building supplies, and general shopping. The ferry also provides, when necessary, EMS services and spends the night here on the island to be available in the event of a medical emergency. In short, the ferry is essential to Islesboro's continued existence as a robust and viable community.

As you are undoubtedly aware, the pandemic has caused significant problems for ferry services, as well as public transportation in general. Reliability is an important component of the service provided by MSFS. The consequences of the pandemic have created serious staffing and personnel issues, and, not surprisingly, issues with the reliability of service as well. In addition, personnel costs and the cost of operating and maintaining the MSFS fleet of vessels present significant issues of continued affordability of the service to our island's residents. Affordability is a critical issue for our town, particularly in regard to our ability to attract younger families and new residents to our community and have them stay once here.

We unanimously support MaineDOT's proposal for the Ferry Service for Rural Communities Program. This opportunity presented by the FTA's Ferry Programs under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Program and Consolidated Appropriates Act will support necessary and critical transportation services to our community and the other islands served by the MSFS all of which constitute a vital part of what is the State of Maine.

Sincerely,



Janet R. Anderson

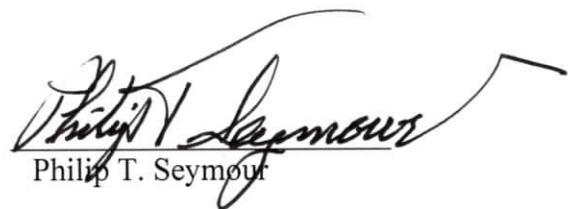
Islesboro Select Board



Gabriel I. Pendleton, Chair



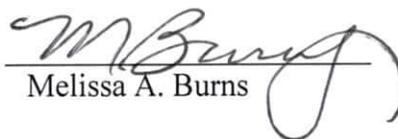
Shey V. Conover



Philip T. Seymour



Lauren K. Bruce



Melissa A. Burns

Sincerely,

Matinicus Isle Plantation

P.O. Box 198 17 South Road
Matinicus Island, Maine 04851
(207) 366-3980

August 25, 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:

The community of Matinicus Isle 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. Funding support for operating costs would enhance the Maine State Ferry Service's (MSFS's) ability to provide reliable ferry service that is critical to supporting the islands they serve.

The six MSFS routes provide the only public transportation link and only way to move vehicles to and from the rural island communities of Frenchboro, Islesboro, Matinicus, North Haven, Swan's Island, and Vinalhaven. These communities depend on reliable, affordable, and sustainable ferry service for access to jobs, education and services, as well as for emergency medical transport. We are particularly interested in the proposal due to our especially remote location (Matinicus Island is roughly 20 miles from the mainland,) the efforts of our resident working families to keep this offshore community viable, our ever-increasing need for materials carried by truck (such as building supplies, propane, heating oil, and the proper disposal of solid waste,) and the rising costs associated with all forms of transportation over water.

Matinicus supports and encourages MaineDOT's proposal for the Ferry Service for Rural Communities Program. This opportunity presented through FTA's Ferry Programs under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and Consolidated Appropriations Act would help support crucial transportation service to the Maine island communities served by MSFS.

Sincerely,

George Tarkleson


Administrative Assistant to the Board of Assessors, Matinicus Isle Plantation
Municipal Treasurer and Tax Collector

Eva Murray


Matinicus Island Representative, Maine State Ferry Service Advisory Board
Municipal Clerk

TOWN OF SWAN'S ISLAND

P.O. Box 11
125 Harbor Road
Swan's Island, Maine 04685
e-mail swanisle@tdstelme.net
Tel: 207 526-4279 Fax: 207 526-4172

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:

The Select Board for the Town of Swan's Island are pleased to express their 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. Funding support for operating costs would enhance the Maine State Ferry Service's (MSFS's) ability to provide reliable ferry service that is critical to supporting the islands they serve.

The six MSFS routes provide the only public transportation link and only way to move commerce to and from the rural island communities of Frenchboro, Islesboro, Matinicus, North Haven, Swan's Island, and Vinalhaven. These communities depend on reliable, affordable, and sustainable ferry service for access to jobs, education and services, as well as for emergency medical transport. The Town of Swan's Island is a lobster fishery community that relies daily on shipping of product and receiving of necessary supplies. Our High School students are transported daily to Bar Harbor for their secondary education on the mainland.

The Town of Swan's Island supports and encourages MaineDOT's proposal for the Ferry Service for Rural Communities Program. This opportunity presented through FTA's Ferry Programs under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and Consolidated Appropriations Act would help support crucial transportation service to the Maine island communities served by MSFS.

Sincerely,



Myron A. Sprague, Jr.
Select Board Chairman

Maine State Ferry Service Advisory Board

August 25, 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:

The Maine State Ferry Service Advisory Board (MSFSAB) 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. Funding support for operating costs would enhance the Maine State Ferry Service's (MSFS's) ability to provide reliable ferry service that is critical to supporting the islands they serve.

The six MSFS routes provide the only public transportation link and only way to move vehicles to and from the rural island communities of Frenchboro, Islesboro, Matinicus, North Haven, Swan's Island, and Vinalhaven. These communities depend on reliable, affordable, and sustainable ferry service for access to jobs, education and services, as well as for emergency medical transport. Our organization is particularly interested in the proposal due to capacity in advising the Maine State Ferry Service and the MaineDOT on matters relating to the state run ferry system. The MSFSAB consists of one member and alternate from each island served by a state run ferry and several from the mainland primarily from each island ferry route's mainland destination. We meet regularly and have input on financial decisions made by the MaineDOT. We are encouraged to have this opportunity to apply for funding for operations which would support our island customers, who rely heavily on the MSFS for transportation to and from the mainland.

Maine State Ferry Service Advisory Board strongly supports and encourages MaineDOT's proposal for the Ferry Service for Rural Communities Program. This opportunity presented through FTA's Ferry Programs under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and Consolidated Appropriations Act would help support crucial transportation service to the Maine island communities served by MSFS.

Sincerely,



Jon Emerson

Chair, Maine State Ferry Service Advisory Board



August 24, 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:

The Island Institute 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. Funding support for operating costs would enhance the Maine State Ferry Service's (MSFS's) ability to provide reliable ferry service that is critical to supporting the islands they serve.

The six MSFS routes provide the only public transportation link and only way to move vehicles to and from the rural island communities of Frenchboro, Islesboro, Matinicus, North Haven, Swan's Island, and Vinalhaven. These communities depend on reliable, affordable, and sustainable ferry service for access to jobs, education, and services, as well as for emergency medical transport. Whether it is children who can't go to school, a small business owner who is shipping a perishable product, or seniors who need to visit their doctor, we regularly see the disruption in people's lives that occurs when regularly scheduled runs are canceled. In addition, the flow of goods to the islands to support home construction, road maintenance, and other infrastructure improvement projects relies on the ferry service. A small disruption can significantly impact the timing and costs of these projects. Without these services, these islands are disconnected from the rest of the State and very quickly would cease to exist as viable communities.

As a community development organization whose mission includes sustaining Maine's year round island communities, the Island Institute is directly interested in the long term sustainability of the MSFS.

The Island Institute supports and encourages MaineDOT's proposal for the Ferry Service for Rural Communities Program. This opportunity presented through FTA's Ferry Programs under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and Consolidated Appropriations Act would help support crucial transportation service to the Maine island communities served by MSFS.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nick Battista".

Nick Battista
Chief Policy Officer
Island Institute



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.

TOWN OF ISLESBORO
P.O. Box 76 • 150 Main Road • Islesboro, Maine 04848
(207) 734-2253 • Fax (207) 734-8394

Janet R. Anderson
Town Manager
manager@townofislesboro.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:

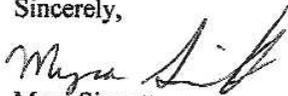
The Islesboro Energy Committee is pleased to express our strong support of the Maine State Department of Transportation's (MaineDOT) submission for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) FY2022 Ferry Service for Rural Communities Program. Funding support for operating costs would enhance the Maine State Ferry Service's (MSFS's) ability to provide reliable ferry service that is critical to supporting the islands they serve.

The six MSFS routes provide the only public transportation link and only way to move vehicles to and from the rural island communities of Frenchboro, Islesboro, Matinicus, North Haven, Swan's Island, and Vinalhaven. It's a long swim to the mainland.

Our community depends on reliable, affordable, and sustainable ferry service for access to jobs, education and services, as well as for emergency medical transport. The Islesboro Energy Committee is particularly interested in the proposal due to plans for an electric ferry, for which we have advocated, and from experiencing the disruptions to daily life here on Islesboro this summer due to the old, unreliable ferries currently in service.

The Islesboro Energy Committee enthusiastically supports and encourages MaineDOT's proposal for the Ferry Service for Rural Communities Program. This opportunity presented through FTA's Ferry Programs under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and Consolidated Appropriations Act would help support crucial transportation service to the Maine island communities served by MSFS. We thank you for this program.

Sincerely,



Myra Sinnott
Chair, Islesboro Energy Committee

MILL POND HEALTH CENTER

Donna Wiegler
Director of Services
235 Minturn Road
Swan's Island, ME 04685
Tel: 207-526-4264

August 25, 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:

On behalf of the Mill Pond Health Center and the Swan's Island community, I am pleased to express my 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. Funding support for operating costs would enhance the Maine State Ferry Service's (MSFS's) ability to provide reliable ferry service that is critical to supporting the islands they serve.

The six MSFS routes provide the only public transportation link and only way to move vehicles to and from the rural island communities of Swan's Island, Frenchboro, Islesboro, Matinicus, North Haven, and Vinalhaven. My community has no other link to the mainland. We do not have air service or private water taxi. The ferry service is our lifeline and our only link to the mainland. Swan's Island and the other five island communities served by the MSFS depend on reliable, affordable, and sustainable ferry service for access to jobs, education and services, as well as for emergency medical transport.

I am particularly interested in supporting MSFS's proposal to help defray the operating cost of the ferry service so that MSFS can stabilize, or reduce, the ticket prices to their customers.

The continuing increased cost of fares over the years has made it a challenge for many island residents to be able to afford to go to the mainland for grocery shopping, social activities, educational opportunities, and necessary medical appointments. Our small island health center only has a medical provider on the island several times a month, which is not nearly enough to satisfy the needs of our population. Many residents, including our large elderly population, require frequent visits to the mainland via the ferry for medical appointments, tests, physical therapy and occupational therapy. Cancer and dialysis patients travel back and forth for treatment multiple times a week. The cost for a vehicle, driver, and two-way reservation is \$80.00 during the summer months. It is slightly less in the winter. This is not affordable for most of our residents and especially those living on a fixed income. Most residents travel to the mainland multiple times a month, while some travel multiple times a week for medical care.

Some rely solely on their Social Security checks as their only income.

About 15% of the annual operating budget for the Mill Pond Health Center goes to ferry expenses. We pay all ferry costs for visiting medical providers who come out to offer services at the health center as well as paying for the ferry expenses each week to send laboratory samples to our local hospital for processing.

Swan's Island, and the other islands served by the MSFS, are vibrant, year-round communities that rely on MSFS to stay connected to the mainland. Teachers, contractors, plumbers, electricians, physicians, and many other critical needs personnel commute to the islands daily to work. Many island residents commute to the mainland daily to work. Without reliable, dependable, and affordable transportation, these island communities will fail to thrive and could be lost forever.

Please understand that the need for help to fund the MSFS's operating cost is urgent and critical. Without this help, fares will continue to increase and we are already at a tipping point for a large percentage of islanders with regards to what they can afford.

The Mill Pond Health Center supports and encourages MaineDOT's proposal for the Ferry Service for Rural Communities Program. This opportunity presented through FTA's Ferry Programs under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and Consolidated Appropriations Act would help support crucial transportation service to the Maine island communities served by MSFS.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Donna Wiegler".

Donna Wiegler
Director of Services
Mill Pond Health Center

SWANS ISLAND FISHERMAN'S COOPERATIVE
15 MORSE'S HILL ROAD, P.O. BOX 116
SWANS ISLAND, ME 04685
207-526-4327

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:

The Swans Island Fisherman's Co-op is pleased to express our strong support of the Maine State Department of Transportation's (Maine DOT) submission for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) FY2022 Ferry Service for Rural Communities Program. Funding support for operation costs would enhance the Maine State Ferry Service's (MSFS'S) ability to provide reliable ferry service that is critical to supporting the islands they serve.

The six MSFS routes provide the only public transportation link and only way to move vehicles to and from the rural island communities of Frenchboro, Islesboro, Matinicus, North Haven, Swans Island, and Vinalhaven. These communities depend on reliable, affordable, and sustainable ferry services for access to jobs, education, and services, as well as for emergency medical transportation.

The economy of Swans Island is dependent on the lobster fishery which is in turn dependent on the Maine State Ferry Service to have bait and other supplies delivered to the island and to ship the lobsters to markets. The Swans Island Fisherman's Co-op has to ship lobsters daily during the season (July thru October) and as the largest lobster dealer and employer on Swans Island we are particularly interested in this proposal.

The Swans Island Fisherman's Co-op supports and encourages Maine DOT's proposal for the Ferry Service for Rural Communities Program. This opportunity presented through FTA's Ferry Programs under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and Consolidated Appropriations Act would help support crucial transportation service to the Maine island communities served by MSFS.

Sincerely,



Kathy Clark,
Manager

VINALHAVEN FISHERMEN'S CO-OP

P.O. BOX 366
VINALHAVEN, MAINE 04863
(207) 863-2263

August 28, 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

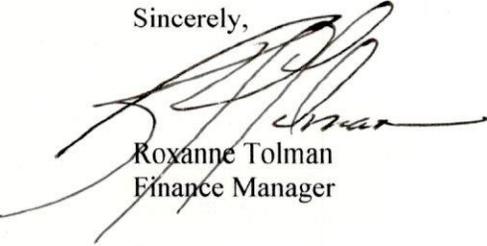
Dear U.S. Secretary Buttigieg:

The Vinalhaven Fisherman's Cooperative 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. Funding support for operating costs would enhance the Maine State Ferry Service's (MSFS's) ability to provide reliable ferry service that is critical to supporting the islands they serve.

The six MSFS routes provide the only public transportation link and only way to move vehicles to and from the rural island communities of Frenchboro, Islesboro, Matinicus, North Haven, Swan's Island, and Vinalhaven. These communities depend on reliable, affordable, and sustainable ferry service for access to jobs, education and services, as well as for emergency medical transport. Our organization is particularly interested in the proposal due to our need to transport perishable goods to and from the island. Without the ability to transport live lobster and bait supplies our business cannot survive. The ferry service is a vital link for our business as well as the economy and sustainability of our island communities.

The Vinalhaven Fisherman's Cooperative supports and encourages MaineDOT's proposal for the Ferry Service for Rural Communities Program. This opportunity presented through FTA's Ferry Programs under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and Consolidated Appropriations Act would help support crucial transportation service to the Maine island communities served by MSFS.

Sincerely,



Roxanne Tolman
Finance Manager

JOHN H. KING, JR.
330 Pendleton Point Rd.
Islesboro, Maine 04848

Tel: 207-318-3826
e-mail: skyfrme@gmail.com

August 25, 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:

I write in support of the Maine State Department of Transportation's (MaineDOT) submission for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) FY2022 Ferry Service for Rural Communities Program. Funding support for operating costs would enhance the Maine State Ferry Service's (MSFS's) ability to provide reliable ferry service that is critical to supporting the mid-coast islands of Maine.

I am a resident of the Town of Islesboro, Maine, one of the islands in Penobscot Bay served by the Maine State Ferry Service. Our town has approximately 600 full time residents and our population increases dramatically during the summer months. In addition to Islesboro, the MSFS also provides service to the communities of Vinalhaven, North Haven, Swan's Island, Frenchboro and Matinicus.

During the summer, our ferry runs nine round trips a day from and to Islesboro. During the off-season, there are seven round trips. Morning runs are filled with contractors and service providers, as well as USPS, UPS, and local building delivery services. The ferry carries cement trucks. Truck traffic is regular and heavy, as we have no gravel pit on the island. All our fuel comes over on the ferry. Residents of the island regularly use the ferry service for food shopping (the island has only two grocery stores), medical appointments, medication pick up (we have a health center but no pharmacy), veterinary services, hardware and building supplies and general shopping. The ferry also provides, when necessary, EMS services and spends the night here on the island in the event of medical emergencies. In short, it is essential to Islesboro's continued existence as a robust and vital community.

August 25, 2022

I currently serve at the request of the Islesboro Select Board as Islesboro's representative of the Maine State Ferry Service Advisory Board, which was created by the Maine Legislature. As such, I am quite familiar with the challenges the MSFS faces as the present time.

As you are undoubtedly aware, the pandemic has caused significant problems for ferry services, as well as public transportation in general. Reliability is an important component of the service provided by MSFS. The consequences of the pandemic have created serious staffing and personnel issues, and, not surprisingly, to the reliability of service as well. In addition, personnel costs and the cost of operating and maintaining the MSFS fleet of vessels present significant issues of continued affordability of the service to our island's residents.

These are important concerns, not only to our community but also, I believe, to the State of Maine. The inhabited islands of this state are an important part of what we are and anything that assists our islands to continue as vibrant and robust communities is, I believe, a benefit of all the citizens of Maine. I wholeheartedly support MaineDOT's proposal for the Ferry Service for Rural Communities Program. This opportunity presented by the FTA's Ferry Programs under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Program and Consolidated Appropriates Act will support necessary and critical transportation services to the Maine island communities and will be money well spent.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John H. King, Jr.", is written over the typed name.

John H. King, Jr.

Jhk/hal