October 13, 2017

David Bernhardt, commissioner
Maine Department of Transportation
16 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0016

RE: Support for Maine Department of Transportation’s project to connect I-395 to Route 9.

Dear Commissioner Bernhardt,

Since 1961, the Maine Forest Products Council, a not-for-profit trade association, has represented the diverse needs of Maine’s forest products community. We speak for logging contractors, sawmills, paper mills, biomass energy, facilities, pellet manufacturers, furniture manufacturers, and on behalf of more than nine million acres of commercial forestland in Maine.

Maine’s forest products industry has an $8.5 billion impact on our state’s economy, according to recent research by the University of Maine.

Safe, reliable transportation is essential not only for our industry, but for the communities through which our workers, trucks and products travel.

That’s why we strongly support Maine’s application for an Infrastructure For Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant. Route 9 is a key road for both wood flow and product delivery. The connector would certainly save transportation time and money for our state’s forest products industry, which is struggling to compete in global markets.

Most important, the connector would greatly improve safety, both for our truck drivers and other drivers with whom they currently must share congested urban roads.

We appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,

Patrick Strauch, Executive Director

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