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May 31, 2023

The Honorable Ann C. Phillips, USN (Ret.)
Administrator
Maritime Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Admiral Phillips:

I write in support of the application submitted by the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) and the Maine Port Authority (MPA) to the U.S. Maritime Administration's (MARAD) Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP). The applicants seek \$39 million in PIDP funds, to be matched with \$35 million from other sources, to modernize three primary ports in Maine.

This project proposes to advance the State's long-term maritime plan, known as "Maine's Three-Port Strategy." This strategy, developed in 1978, aims to concentrate state investments in Maine's deep-water port facilities in Portland, Searsport, and Eastport. The ports in these three communities are central to the economic activity of Maine and the surrounding region. Continued investments, both from public and private sources, are critical toward ensuring Maine's long-term economic growth.

If awarded, this project will make significant investments to strengthen the three major ports in Maine. In Portland, whose International Marine Terminal has seen 20 percent year-over-year growth in container throughput since 2013, investments would be made to dredge the Fore River and to modernize the handling of refrigerated containers. Acknowledging the role that ports have in energy security, a site review is slated for Searsport to assess the feasibility of a new port facility to construct renewable energy equipment. Lastly, in Eastport, which is the United States' easternmost port and the deepest seaport in the continental United States and Canada, investments would be made to extend the breakwater and to bring the fish pier to a state of good repair.

Thank you for your time and effort on behalf of the Maine Department of Transportation and the Maine Port Authority. I urge your careful consideration of their application, in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations, and ask that you notify me directly, or your staff notify Trevor Hustus at (202) 224-2523, when a final decision has been made.

Sincerely,



Susan M. Collins
United States Senator