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February 24, 2023

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

RE: Support Letter for Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) and Eastern Trail Management District Application to the USDOT FY2023 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant Program.

Dear U.S. Secretary Buttigieg:

The Eastern Trail Alliance is writing in support of MaineDOT and Eastern Trail Management District's funding request to the RAISE grant program for the development of approximately 2.7 miles of off-road trail in two segments in North Berwick, Wells, and Kennebunk, Maine. As components of the regional Eastern Trail, these trails will provide bicyclists and pedestrians with safe access to jobs, schools, housing, and other services in these communities.

The 0.7-mile northern trail will link West Kennebunk village center to the current terminus of the Eastern Trail, which connects to an elementary school and continues to the regional service center of Biddeford. The 2-mile southern trail will address the lack of multimodal connectivity from the village of North Berwick to residential areas in Wells. Both trail segments will connect residential areas with major regional employers (Kennebunk Savings Bank and Pratt & Whitney), enabling workers to commute by biking or walking rather than automobile. Together, these ready to develop trails will begin to fill in gaps in the Eastern Trail that have been identified by the Eastern Trail Alliance, which advocates for the trail system and has a long-term vision for an off-road trail that will connect many of Southern Maine's cities and towns.

The Eastern Trail Alliance advocates for the Eastern Trail, raises funds to support trail building and maintenance, and is the front facing organization leading partnerships with the East Coast Greenway Alliance, the Bicycle Coalition of Maine, local businesses and individuals. The Eastern Trail Alliance has committed \$500,000 in non-federal match towards the MaineDOT's RAISE application for the Eastern Trail construction work in the towns of Kennebunk, Wells, and North Berwick. The Eastern Trail Alliance's funding commitment will be transferred to the Eastern Trail Management District as we are sister organizations dedicated to the Eastern Trail.

In support of this important effort, the Eastern Trail Alliance supports the projects included in this RAISE application, which will have a significant local and regional impact by providing safe and sustainable connections to economic opportunities and essential services in our communities. These projects will improve vulnerable user safety, reduce emissions, and overall improve quality of life for these communities.

Sincerely,

Eric Wright  
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