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August 13, 2009

Commissioner David Cole
Maine Department of Transportation
16 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0016


Commissioner Cole:

The City of Calais enthusiastically supports the restoration of rail freight service to the port of Eastport. The proposal to return rail to the Town of Perry via the St. Croix line through Calais will allow the Port of Eastport, the deepest natural seaport in the entire continental United States, to have rail access for the first time ever in its thirty years of existence. In addition the project would provide upgrades to the existing line that would ensure its viability for the Calais/Baileysville area for the foreseeable future. The restoration and preservation of this corridor is important for the economic future of Washington County as we look for more affordable transportation costs for our industries to compete with others outside our area.


The cost of the proposal, estimated between 38 to 53 million dollars, far exceeds the resources of Washington County. Please consider this project for application for funding to the American Recovery and Reinvesting Act of 2009 (ARRA) Tiger Grant Program through the Maine Department of Transportation. The short term impact on the economy would be significant with construction work, and the long term investment in rail infrastructure will provide growth opportunities for the Port of Eastport and all of communities along the rail.


We hope the Federal Government will give the application of the Eastport Freight Rail Restoration Project serious and favorable consideration for ARRA Tiger Grant Program funding. Thank you for the support you have given our community the past and we look forward to a prosperous future for all of Washington County.

Sincerely,



Vinton E. Cassidy


Joseph Cassidy


William Condon


Michael Milburn


Christopher Bernardini


C. Louis Bernardini

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