

copy to: Chris Gardner**Better
Transportation**

August 11, 2009

**Maine Better
Transportation
Association**146 State Street
Augusta, Maine 04330

PHONE: 207-622-0526

FAX: 207-623-2928

www.mbtaonline.org

Commissioner David A. Cole
Maine Department of Transportation
State House Station #16
Augusta, Maine 04333Dear *David* Commissioner Cole,

On behalf of the Maine Better Transportation Association, I wanted to express our strong support for the project being advanced to establish a rail connection to the port of Eastport. As you are well aware, the port is well-situated to compete in the global marketplace. It has a strong labor force, a young pier, and excellent capacity to expand. We believe that in order to expand, however, a rail connection is critical.

We support Eastport's vision to move cargo into the Montreal market and into the mid-western U.S. during the winter months. There are various potential bulk commodities that would require rail transportation from the port. We must maximize every available opportunity to enhance this transportation asset.

Washington County is struggling economically – even more so than other counties – and we believe that the Port of Eastport needs rail access to be connected to the possibilities afforded by an extended hinterland. Anything the state can do to maximize the investment made when the pier was built, would help the entire state – not just the eastern region.

Thank you for your continuing support of critical transportation projects such as this one.

Sincerely,

Maria R. Fuentes
Executive Director