



Quoddy Pilots USA  
99 Toll Bridge Road  
Eastport, Maine 04631  
U.S.A.

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

**Reference: Eastport Gateway Project**

Dear Commissioner Cole,

I am writing this letter in support of a proposal to request a grant from the ARRA (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act) Federal Stimulus money for the proposed **Eastport Freight Rail Restoration Project**.

There could be no better use of this stimulus money than bringing rail to the cargo handling facilities at the Port of Eastport to support bulk cargos. As you are aware, the current situation with Eastport's major cargo port user (Domtar wood pulp in Woodland) is tenuous at best. Eastport must have the ability to attract other cargos and shippers if we are to continue with our employment base. Rail will undoubtedly assist in bringing new cargo to the Port of Eastport.

During the recent short Domtar closing, Washington County suffered severe employment shock and, based on the Maine Labor Department's labor report newsletter sent out yesterday, the county suffers the highest unemployment rate in the State of Maine. If the purpose of the stimulus money is to stimulate the economy and create (and retain) jobs, then this rail restoration project is exactly what the program was designed for.

The Port of Eastport desperately needs rail access, if not directly to the port, then close by. This would give the port the ability to more fully utilize the tremendous facility paid for the tax payers of Maine. We have the deepest cargo port (68 foot draft) on the East Coast, without dredging, and with that deep draft ability comes the opportunity to handle bulk cargos that could not be handled anywhere else in Maine, especially with the addition of nearby rail.

I have been a seaman and/or pilot in almost every port in the Great Lakes, East, Gulf, and Pacific Coasts of the United States, and worked in many ports in 72 countries around the world. Ports are what drives most country's economic development, and are the key to developing Maine's slowly deteriorating economy. Every successful cargo port has access to rail. I strongly fought the short sighted removal of rail into Eastport when I was a member of the Eastport Port Authority. The time to bring rail back is now.

It is time to invest in our future, and this grant will go a long way towards developing additional employment in Maine.

Most respectfully,

*Robert J. Peacock*

Captain Robert J. Peacock  
Quoddy Pilots USA  
Office 207-733-5556 Mobile 207-263-6403