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August 10, 2009



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

Reference: Eastport Gateway Project

Dear Commissioner Cole:

Sunrise County Economic Council (SCEC) is writing in strong support of the Eastport Gateway Project which focuses on returning rail to the Town of Perry via the existing St. Croix line and the construction of a state of the industry inter-modal facility in Perry. This 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 30 plus year existence.

We are firmly committed to improving all aspects of Washington County's infrastructure. This includes bringing rail back to the county, diversifying the Port of Eastport, and creating more efficient regional transportation corridors that benefit the entire state. Additionally, the Eastport Gateway Project will pump between \$38-53 million into the regional economy at a time when unemployment levels are at historic highs.

SCEC has been working alongside Port and industry officials to better position and diversify the Port of Eastport since before the Domtar Mill in Baileyville halted production earlier this year. That shutdown, although brief, brought home to many the fact that the Port can not succeed unless it becomes more connected with the global marketplace.

SCEC is a private nonprofit organization that initiates and facilitates the creation of prosperity and jobs in Washington County, Maine. Founded in 1993, SCEC has designed and implemented long-range solutions to the multi-faceted economic and community development issues facing Washington County by crafting robust partnerships with area nonprofits, state and local government, and our diverse business community. Over the past two or three years, SCEC has helped bring an estimated \$220 million in investments to the region, and continues to push for broad-based long-term investments that are necessary to revitalize our economy.

In closing, the Eastport Gateway Project will reposition Maine, Washington County and the Port of Eastport in the global economy. A project of this magnitude can be transformational. We believe the Port of Eastport and its personnel have what it takes to make that happen, and that the economy will reap benefits for decades to come.

Sincerely,

Harold W Clossey  
Executive Director