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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1903

August 26, 2009

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

Dear David:

I am writing to express my strong support for the grant application being submitted by the State of Maine on behalf of Washington County and the Port of Eastport, Maine for a *Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery* (TIGER) discretionary grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation.

It is my understanding that the Eastport Freight Rail Restoration Project will return rail to the Town of Perry, Maine via the existing St. Croix rail line and will include the construction of a state-of-the-industry intermodal facility in Perry. This project will also establish rail access for the Port of Eastport - - the deepest natural seaport in Maine and, indeed, the entire continental United States. The rail line is a critical component of the port's continued viability and growth and will undoubtedly help generate short and long-term economic development opportunities for Washington County.

As you know, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 appropriated \$1.5 billion to provide Supplementary Discretionary Grants for a National Surface Transportation System. These funds, referred to as TIGER discretionary grants, are to be utilized to engender capital investments in surface transportation projects that will have a significant impact on the nation, a metropolitan area or a region. Undeniably, the Eastport Freight Rail Restoration Project proposal will have a monumental impact on the region and, consistent with the objectives of the Recovery Act, will help preserve and create jobs. It will also help promote economic recovery and provide long-term economic benefits in a section of our state that has been disproportionately impacted by the downturn in our economy. It is with this in mind that I lend my enthusiastic support to this proposal.

Thank you for your time and effort on behalf of Washington County and the Port of Eastport.

Sincerely,


OLYMPIA J. SNOWE
United States Senator

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