

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 8, 2018

Mr. Dennis Alvord  
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Regional Affairs  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Suite 71014  
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Deputy Assistant Secretary Alvord:

We write in support of the application submitted by Our Katahdin, based in Millinocket, Maine, for grant funding through the Economic Development Administration's Economic Adjustment Assistance program for disaster relief and recovery. As a part of the organization's economic development and revitalization efforts in this struggling region of Maine, Our Katahdin proposes to strengthen economic resiliency efforts in the region by rebuilding infrastructure on a vacant former mill property that will house new, innovative forest products and digital fiber companies.

Our Katahdin, an all-volunteer nonprofit organization, was formed following the closure of a large paper mill in Millinocket that resulted in significant job losses. The organization has since undertaken major community and economic development efforts to assist with the region's recovery initiatives and attract much-needed investment to the area. Last year, in an effort to create jobs and help develop a more sustainable bio-based economy, Our Katahdin purchased the former Great Northern Paper mill property to repurpose the vacant industrial site to support forest product innovation.

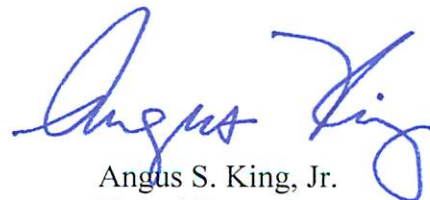
In 2016, the U.S. Department of Commerce assembled a multiagency Economic Development Assessment Team (EDAT) in Maine to provide technical assistance, identify federal resources and strategies, and coordinate federal support to strengthen the state's forest product industry. If funded, Our Katahdin will invest in infrastructure, such as power, water, fiber optics, and roads, to ensure its "next generation fiber park" is ready for new businesses. We believe that Our Katahdin's commitment to revitalizing the Millinocket region aligns with the EDA's disaster relief and recovery goals, and that these infrastructure upgrades are a necessary part of the region's economic development, job creation, and overall vibrancy.

Thank you for your time and effort on behalf of Our Katahdin and the Katahdin region of Maine. We request your careful consideration of this application, subject to all applicable laws and regulations, and ask that you please notify Katie Seelen (Collins) at (202) 224-2523 and Adam Lachman (King) at (202) 224-5344 when a final decision has been made.

Sincerely,



Susan M. Collins  
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.  
United States Senator