

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

June 9, 2021

Mr. Robert Chapman
Acting Director
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services
U.S. Department of Justice
145 N Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Mr. Chapman:

We write in support of an application submitted by the Aroostook County, Maine, Sheriff's Office for a Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) grant for three additional deputies. As the Department of Justice reviews the applications that it receives from law enforcement agencies nationwide, we are hopeful this important Maine application receives careful consideration.

Aroostook County is the largest county by land area east of the Mississippi River. In fact, it is larger than three states in the union. It has a population of approximately 67,000 residents spread over 2 cities, 53 towns, 9 plantations and 112 unorganized townships. The Aroostook County Sheriff's Office patrols the entire area with only 13 patrol deputies. In addition to the Sheriff's Office, there are 9 municipal law enforcement agencies and the Maine State Police. When fully staffed, there are 73 officers; however, there are currently 16 open, full-time positions — a vacancy rate of 22 percent. In the last few years, one municipality dissolved its police department due to a lack of staffing, and others have asked for additional coverage from the Sheriff's Office due to limited staffing. Taken together, these facts highlight the need for the Sheriff's Office to increase its capacity.

If awarded, the Sheriff's Office will coordinate with communities to ensure that they have proper law enforcement coverage and visibility. The increase in the number of deputies would be used to focus on the implementation of community policing tactics, allowing deputies in these rural communities to make contact with residents and visit town offices, businesses, and schools to engage in activities designed to increase trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve.

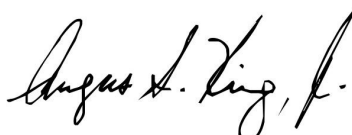
Thank you for your time and effort on behalf of the Aroostook County Sheriff's Office. We urge your careful consideration of its application, in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations, and ask that you please notify

when a final decision has been made.

Sincerely,



Susan M. Collins
United States Senator



Angus S. King Jr.
United States Senator



Jared F. Golden
Member of Congress