

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1904

June 10, 2024

The Honorable Gina Raimondo  
U.S. Secretary of Commerce U.S. Department of Commerce  
Fourteenth Street and Constitution Ave., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20230-0001

Dear Secretary Raimondo:

I am writing to reiterate my support for Maine's application for a Phase 2 Implementation grant from the Economic Development Administration (EDA) Tech Hubs program. Having received Tech Hub designation with *Maine's Forest Bioproducts Advanced Manufacturing Technology Hub*, the state seeks Phase 2 funds to grow wood-derived product companies in Maine and become the nation's premier destination for this work. It is my understanding that Maine is one of only 13 states that have not yet received Implementation funds through any of the recent EDA opportunities.

The forest products industry is a heritage industry in Maine, and the state is uniquely positioned to attract firms developing cutting-edge products derived from forests. Phase 2 Implementation funds would go a long way in advancing these efforts, from expanding technological maturation capabilities to investments supporting commercialization efforts. The opportunity presented by a Phase 2 federal investment would be truly transformative, complementing the \$630 million in support committed by private and state partners and building upon the important work of the Forest Opportunity Roadmap/Maine (FOR/Maine) Coalition. A unique cross-sector collaboration between industry, communities, government, education, and nonprofits, created with support from the EDA and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, FOR/Maine's goal is to ensure that Maine strategically adapts and capitalizes on changing markets to maintain its leading role in the global forest economy and support prosperity in the state.

Additionally, I am aware that another impressive Maine project proposed by Main Street Skowhegan is competing for EDA Implementation funding, and that project also has my strongest support. I am confident that if selected, both of these projects would strengthen Maine's workforce and economy.

With this in mind, thank you for your consideration of Maine's application for EDA Tech Hubs Phase 2 funding, consistent with applicable laws, rules, and regulations. Please notify Deidre Grant at (207) 945-0417 when a decision has been made.

Sincerely,



Susan M. Collins  
United States Senator

cc: The Honorable Alejandro Y. Castilla  
Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development