

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

March 17, 2021

The Honorable Justin Maxson
Deputy Under Secretary for Rural Development
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Mr. Maxson,

We write to express our support for the recent application from Black Mountain of Maine to the U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of Rural Development. If approved, this grant would provide the resources needed for Black Mountain to improve its snow grooming equipment and enhance its operation as an outdoor recreational area for years to come.

Black Mountain of Maine is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit ski recreation area, with both alpine and Nordic trails, located in the Town of Rumford. Black Mountain is dedicated to serving the communities in western Maine known as the River Valley, and seeks to assist residents in making healthy lifestyle choices, particularly in the wintertime. To achieve this, Black Mountain provides free skiing to those in grade two and below, as well as to seniors over 75 years of age. Its mission is especially important in a rural area of the state with high rates of obesity, smoking, and other negative public health indicators.

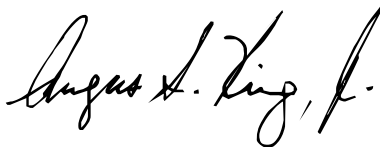
In addition to the critical public service that Black Mountain provides for the public, the Mountain is also a key economic driver in the western Maine region. The skiing destination has spurred related economic development in Rumford, including a \$5.5 million hotel project now under construction. It is important that the Mountain's equipment be updated to maintain the slopes in the best condition to provide a first-class experience for visitors to the mountain. The current groomer is well beyond its expected life, and repairs are difficult and expensive since many of the parts are no longer produced. If Black Mountain were to close due to inability to maintain the trails, the economic impact could be felt all across the region.

Thank you for your time and effort reviewing these proposals. We urge your careful consideration of Black Mountain of Maine's applications, in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations, and ask that you please notify Trevor Hustus (Collins) at (202) 224-2523, Adam Lachman (King) at (202) 224-5344, and Dan Jenkins (Golden) at (207) 241-6767 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