Sen. Susan M. Collins
3-D Printer event
Oct. 10, 2019

Thank you so much, Habib. What an exciting day this is for the University of Maine, for the entire State of Maine, and indeed for our country. Habib has recognized so many people this morning. I would like you all to join me in recognizing Habib for his leadership and his extraordinary vision.

In May, we all came together to announce a remarkable project that included bringing the world's largest 3D printer to the University of Maine. Now, when I first heard "the world's," I thought, "you mean 'the country's' right?" And Habib said, "no, the world's!"

Announcements are wonderful, but unveilings are even better and that's what we're going to do today.

We are here to celebrate not only cutting-edge technology, but also the great partnerships that Habib, and the Chancellor, and the President have outlined. That has helped turn this dream into a reality. I want to thank all of the federal agencies that have been or will be involved in this exciting project.

The future of the Composites Center is truly game changing thanks to the excellent working relationship between UMaine and the Oak Ridge National Laboratory that will support next-generation, large-scale additive manufacturing with bio-based thermoplastics. Oak Ridge is a global leader in additive manufacturing, while UMaine is the expert in bio-based composites. So when you put those strengths together, you will improve environmentally responsible advanced manufacturing throughout America and strengthen the forest-products industry right here in Maine.

As a senior member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I worked hard with Senators Lamar Alexander—who happens to represent Oak Ridge—and Dianne Feinstein to secure $20 million in federal funding for this exciting collaboration this year. And I have good news to report: the pending bill, which has been approved by the full Appropriations Committee for fiscal year 2020, includes another $20 million. This project is an outstanding example of our national labs working cooperatively with universities to support advancing new technologies as the initial application of this technology to the Maine boatbuilding industry demonstrates. And, Chancellor, I've been here a lot longer than you have, so I get first dibs. I have a camp on Cold Stream Pond. All I have are kayaks, and I love kayaks, but can you imagine zooming around the lake with that? I think that would be really cool.

There's exciting work being done on the DoD-side too. I worked to secure $17 million in the Senate's approved fiscal year 2020 defense funding bill to advance rapid prototyping work. Just think of the implications for our military if they could print

prototypes of new, fast boats. I know Navatek is working on that right now. That's going to be good for both taxpayers as well as our military service members who will ultimately benefit from this technology. It is so exciting to see what is going on. The vision for this Center—Habib's vision—is alive and well, and I want to congratulate everyone.

The amazing progress that has led to this day are due to the work ethic and the ingenuity for which Maine is known as well as the determination and the spirit of invention that characterize our great State. Congratulations, it's great to be here. Thank you.

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