

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 14, 2016

The Honorable Thomas Perez
Secretary
United States Department of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20210

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We are writing in support of the recently filed Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) petition to assist workers at the Cascades Auburn Fiber mill in Auburn, Maine. These workers are being displaced due in large measure to increased foreign competition within the de-inked pulp market.

The Cascades mill in Auburn used to produce de-inked pulp by removing ink from recycled paper. The lower-cost de-inked pulp being imported into the northeast American market from Canada, combined with the decreased demand for packaging, printing, and writing paper, led to the Auburn mill losing contracts and ultimately having to cease operations this month.

This is the tenth Maine pulp or paper mill to close since 2008, a trend that has resulted in the loss of thousands of good-paying jobs. The skilled Auburn mill workers face an enormous hurdle in identifying and securing meaningful alternative employment in the area for which they have the qualifying experience. As a result, it is crucial that these workers receive the retraining and reemployment resources available through TAA certification. Such a certification will allow them to get back on their feet more quickly and continue making critical contributions to their communities and the economy.


We urge that you review this TAA application in a timely manner, consistent with all applicable rules and regulations, to ensure that these trade-affected workers receive the assistance they need to obtain work and maintain their financial stability.

Thank you for your consideration on behalf of the former Cascades Auburn Fiber mill workers.

Sincerely,


Susan M. Collins
United States Senator


Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator


Bruce Poliquin
Member of Congress