

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 13, 2017

Ms. Linda Cruz-Carnall
Regional Director
U.S. Economic Development Administration
Robert N.C. Nix Federal Building
900 Market Street, Room 602
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Dear Ms. Cruz-Carnall:

We write to bring to your attention the application submitted by the Northern Forest Center to the U.S. Economic Development Administration's (EDA) Economic Adjustment Assistance Program. Through its proposal titled "*Economic Resilience in the Northern Forest*," the organization seeks to help Maine forest-based businesses improve economic competitiveness, leverage private investment, and grow in an effort to retain and create jobs.

Maine is home to vast timber resources and a workforce that harvests, hauls, and processes wood from its forests. The forest products industry employs thousands of Mainers in jobs that are located in rural areas with few other employment options. With the recent closure of multiple mills and a subsequent decline of forest industry jobs, the forest products industry is engaged in a process to adapt to changing market needs and trends.

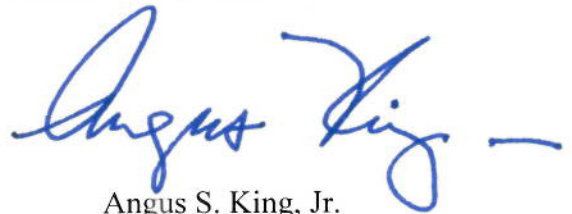
Through its proposal, the Northern Forest Center aims to partner with several industry stakeholders to provide technical assistance to Maine businesses in three forest-based economy sectors: secondary wood products manufacturing, wood heat, and destination tourism. The Center proposes to provide customized assistance – ranging from basic digital marketing to complex staff training – in an effort to help businesses enhance their products, delivery, and services. If funded, it is imperative that the Center actively coordinates these proposed efforts with existing EDA-supported initiatives and local partners in a manner that benefits Maine's forest economy and forest-based communities.

Thank you for your time and effort on behalf of the Northern Forest Center and Maine's economy. We urge EDA's careful consideration of this application, subject to all applicable laws and regulations, and ask that you please notify Katie Seelen (Collins) at (202) 224-2523 and Adam Lachman (King) at (202) 224-5344 when a final decision has been made.

Sincerely,



Susan M. Collins
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator