



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
The Secretary of Commerce
Washington, D.C. 20230

March 28, 2016

The Honorable Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator King:

Thank you for your cosigned letter requesting that the Department of Commerce work with you to address Maine's recent challenges in its forest-based economy. Please be assured that the Department is aware of the recent mill closures and job losses occurring in Maine's pulp and paper industry and is committed to assisting the impacted communities as they begin the process of retooling their economies. To that end, I have tasked the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to lead the Department's efforts in addressing the challenges in your state.

In response to your request, Ms. Linda Cruz-Carnall, the Regional Director for EDA's Philadelphia office, and Alan Brigham, Economic Development Representative for Maine, will travel to Lincoln and Millinocket on March 29-30. The planned two-day visit will be the first, but certainly not the last, engagement in the region. As in every instance of industry collapse or restructuring, the solution to the problem is never the same – there is no “one size fits all” approach to economic recovery. After the EDA team has had an opportunity to gain insight into the issues, we will provide you with a more thoughtful and detailed plan for the Department's response in as timely a manner as possible.

I have asked EDA leadership to keep me personally apprised of ongoing efforts in Maine. They will inform me and other Commerce leaders of any additional support needed in carrying out this important mission. If I can be of further assistance, please call me or Steve Haro, Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs, at (202) 482-3663.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Penny Pritzker".

Penny Pritzker