

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 18, 2021

Ms. Nuria Fernandez
Administrator
Federal Transit Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Administrator Fernandez:

I write in support of the application submitted by Casco Bay Island Transit District (CBITD) for funding through the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) competitive Passenger Ferry Grant Program. If funded, CBITD would procure the construction of a new vessel in their fleet equipped with an innovative, low-emission, diesel electric hybrid propulsion system.

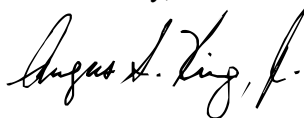
Based in Portland, Maine, and operating since 1981, CBITD is a quasi-municipal entity that provides year-round ferry service to six unbridged islands in Casco Bay. The ferry system is a critical lifeline for the islands' fulltime and seasonal residents that would otherwise have no means of transportation to the mainland. CBITD's five ferries are an essential part of Maine's transportation network, transporting over one million passengers annually. Prior to the pandemic, demand for Casco Bay ferry service has continued to grow every year since 2009.

CBITD's primary vessel servicing the southern islands in Casco Bay will soon reach the end of its useful life resulting in necessary improvements to its fleet, which has an average age of almost 25 years. This project aligns with FTA's program goals by replacing an aging, inefficient, and increasingly expensive vessel to maintain. CBITD's proposed major transportation improvement is crucial to the ferry system's continued safe and reliable operations and will benefit our state's residents and visitors alike for years to come.

Further, I am particularly supportive of CBITD's plan to equip this new vessel with innovative battery propulsion technology in place of a conventional diesel mechanical propulsion system. As both our country and the State of Maine seek ways to reduce our climate impact, this project will contribute directly to a cleaner energy future, eliminating an estimated 1,000 metric tons of CO2 emissions annually, and improving the experience for riders and surrounding communities through thoughtful investment in modernized transportation infrastructure.

Thank you for your attention to the Casco Bay Island Transit District's application. I urge your careful consideration of this application, subject to all applicable laws and regulations, and ask that you please notify Adam Lachman in my office at (202) 224-5344 when a final decision has been made.

Sincerely,



Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator