

Maine State Ferry Service Advisory Board

August 25, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

SUBJECT: Letter of Support for the Federal Transit Administration FY2022 Electric or Low-Emitting Ferry Pilot Program

Dear U.S. Secretary Buttigieg:

The Maine State Ferry Advisory Board (MSFSAB) is pleased to express our strong support of the Maine State Department of Transportation's (MaineDOT) submission for the FY2022 Electric or Low-Emitting Ferry Pilot Program for funding to construct a replacement ferry for the *Margaret Chase Smith*.

The new vessel will replace the aging *Margaret Chase Smith*, which provides vehicle and passenger ferry service between Lincolnville and Islesboro, Maine State Ferry System's (MSFS's) most-traveled route. As the only means of public transportation to and from Islesboro, and the only way for vehicles to travel on and off Islesboro, the ferry provides a crucial link for island residents and visitors. The island depends on reliable, sustainable ferry service for access to jobs and services, as well as for emergency medical transport. Replacement of the current vessel is key to maintaining safe, reliable ferry service to Islesboro.

The new vessel will be designed with electric or hybrid propulsion, based upon public input and in alignment with the state's electric vehicle and transportation emissions-reduction goals. The MSFSAB is particularly interested in the proposal due to our role of advising the MSFS in matters concerning each island's ferry needs. All the islands served by the MSFS are looking forward to the future of electric ferries coming to Maine. Indeed, we feel we are on the forefront of this effort. Many of our customers rely upon the ocean for their living, either directly or indirectly, and reducing the carbon footprint to the MSFS will help preserve the ocean surrounding us all.

The Maine State Ferry Service Advisory Board enthusiastically supports and encourages MaineDOT's proposal for the Electric or Low-Emitting Ferry Pilot Program. Funding this project would allow for construction of a new vessel that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve ferry service and provide greater public access to work, education, and services through safe, reliable, and economical public transportation.

Sincerely,



Jon Emerson

Chair, Maine State Ferry Service Advisory Board