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Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

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SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

Dr. Parkinson Pino

Dear Dr. Pino,

Thank you for contacting me regarding the proposed East-West Highway in Maine. I appreciate hearing from you.

Proposals for an East-West highway connecting Maine with the Canadian Maritimes and the northern parts of New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Vermont and New York have been introduced for decades, but due to funding, politics, and concerns about the environment, the plans have never come to fruition. The latest proposal for such a highway comes from Peter Vigue, CEO of the Cianbro Corporation. His plan calls for the construction of a 220-mile toll highway across Maine. The project is expected to cost \$2 billion which Cianbro intends to raise through private funding.

Supporters of the highway point to greater investments that could flow to Maine, while local residents have raised concerns about potential impacts to their homes, communities, and the environment. The specific route, impacts, and further details of the highway remain largely undefined. As such, I oppose this private highway proposal. Instead I support greater investment in Maine's East-West rail infrastructure, specifically, connecting our existing railroad network with the Port of Eastport.

Eastport is the easternmost port and the deepest natural seaport in the continental US and Canada. The port's competitiveness, however, has been significantly hindered by its lack of access to rail. Extending a rail link to Eastport will connect the harbor to western markets throughout the US and Canada, improve our import-export markets with Europe and South America, and provide economic benefits to businesses and manufacturers throughout Maine. As negotiations for the U.S.-EU trade agreement get underway, connecting Eastport via rail to the rest of the state, particularly our manufacturers, will become increasingly important. It is this form of infrastructure investment I believe our state needs most.

Once again thank you for contacting me on this issue. Please know that I will keep your thoughtful comments in mind should the East-West Highway proposal become a federal issue.

Sincerely,



Michael H. Michaud  
Member of Congress

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