

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

August 17, 2018

The Honorable Pat Roberts  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition  
and Forestry  
328A Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow  
Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition  
and Forestry  
328A Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Michael Conaway  
Chairman  
House Committee on Agriculture  
1301 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Collin Peterson  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Agriculture  
1305 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Roberts, Chairman Conaway, Ranking Member Stabenow and Ranking Member Peterson:

As you begin to negotiate the final Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018 (the Farm Bill), we respectfully request that you to include Section 6304 of the Senate-passed bill, which would extend the authorization of the Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC) for five years, while making additional and necessary reforms to encourage business retention and economic development in distressed counties in the Northern Forest region. We appreciate your past support of the NBRC, and request your partnership in strengthening Federal and state efforts to spur job creation and development in our states.

Established in the 2008 Farm Bill, the NBRC is a Federal-state partnership that provides infrastructure and economic development in 36 rural counties in northern New Hampshire, Vermont, New York and Maine. Over the past decade, the NBRC has invested more than \$30.2 million in 152 job-creating projects that have helped reduce poverty, unemployment and outmigration in Northern Forest communities. These investments have helped leverage more than \$87 million in other public and private funds. In the last year alone, the Commission supported 37 projects, the majority of which supported telecommunications, transportation and basic public infrastructure projects that will encourage job creation and economic improvement in the region.

Continued Federal investment in the NBRC is critical to encouraging economic development and job growth in our communities. For this reason, we urge you to retain language reauthorizing the NBRC, which is set to expire this year. Inclusion of Section 6304 would enhance the impact of the Commission to better leverage Federal resources in the Northeast. This includes providing economic development tools and resources to additional counties in New Hampshire and Vermont, strengthening forest industries and the forest economy, as well as improving the region's capacity for high-impact community economic development projects that support business retention and expansion, access to high-speed broadband, critical infrastructure development and job creation.

Thank you for your consideration. The grant investments from the NBRC have significantly improved the infrastructure and quality of life for many residents in our states. We look forward to working with you to continue the success of this program and the great work that it does.

Sincerely,



ANN MCLANE KUSTER  
Member of Congress



JEANNE SHAHEEN  
United States Senator



PATRICK LEAHY  
United States Senator



SUSAN M. COLLINS  
United States Senator



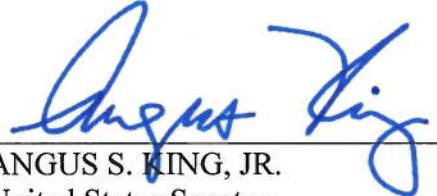
KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND  
United States Senator



MARGARET WOOD HASSAN  
United States Senator



BERNARD SANDERS  
United States Senator



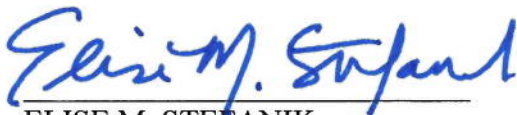
ANGUS S. KING, JR.  
United States Senator



PETER WELCH  
Member of Congress



CAROL SHEA-PORTER  
Member of Congress



ELISE M. STEFANIK  
Member of Congress



CLAUDIA TENNEY  
Member of Congress



JOHN KATKO  
Member of Congress



CHELLIE PINGREE  
Member of Congress