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August 30, 2024

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden:

I write to express my support for the designation of the Frances Perkins Homestead in Newcastle, Maine, as a National Monument. As the first woman to serve in a Presidential Cabinet, Secretary Perkins is deserving of this honor.

An influential figure during Franklin D. Roosevelt's presidency and a driving force behind the creation of Social Security, Secretary Perkins left a lasting mark on American history. She served as our nation's fourth Secretary of Labor and was also the first woman to enter the presidential line of succession. A leader of great intelligence with an abiding commitment to public service, Secretary Perkins worked alongside members of Congress to create laws that still govern workplaces today and have bettered American lives for generations.

The Frances Perkins Homestead was designated a National Historic Landmark in 2014. It is situated on the banks of the Damariscotta River on farmland first settled by the Perkins family in the mid-18th century. The Center at the Frances Perkins Homestead serves as an educational site year-round, helping to share Secretary Perkins' life and legacy with visitors from across the United States. A monument designation of the homestead would enhance the Center's educational and community resources for the people of Maine and the nation.

Under the Antiquities Act of 1906, the President has the authority to designate national monuments that contain historic landmarks or other symbols of national or scientific interest. Given Secretary Perkins' meaningful contributions to American life, I support designating the Frances Perkins Center as a national monument. Before any designation is finalized, I also urge you to consider the views of the Maine Legislature and of the Maine residents who work and live in the surrounding area.

Secretary Perkins was known for her resilient spirit and enduring impact, both as a policy maker and pioneering first woman Cabinet member. Surrounded by the natural beauty of 57 acres in Newcastle, her ancestral homestead now represents an opportunity to preserve and honor her impressive legacy of service to our country.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Susan M. Collins
United States Senator