

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20510

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November 15, 2016

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy  
Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works  
Department of the Army  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington DC 20310-0108

Dear Secretary Darcy:

We write with great concern regarding the challenges confronting the Navy and Bath Iron Works (BIW) as they seek to safely transit newly constructed Navy destroyers from Bath, Maine down the Kennebec River to the Atlantic for sea trials and ship delivery.

The Kennebec River is an authorized Federal navigation channel that falls under the Army Corps of Engineers jurisdiction and responsibility. Unfortunately, recent river soundings performed in the past several weeks have found areas as shallow as 18-feet compared to the authorized navigation channel depth of 27-feet deep and 500-feet wide. This summer's drought conditions have no doubt contributed to these circumstances, which prevented DDG-115 (future USS) PERALTA from departing BIW for a September machinery sea trial.

We have been informed that there is a temporary work-around plan that will involve PERALTA transiting outside the navigable channel. That, however, is not a long-term solution.

Emergency dredging of the Kennebec River by the Army Corps of Engineers is essential to U.S. Navy Fleet operations and our national defense. Without this activity, these Navy ships will not have safe, reliable passage on the Kennebec River, which would result in a significant degradation to our national defense.

Because there is a limited period of time to perform dredging on the Kennebec River from November to February, the Army Corps of Engineers must undertake an emergency dredging of the River as soon as possible. In addition, we would like to work with you and the Navy to establish a long-term, resourced plan for the periodic sounding and dredging of the River's federal navigation channel in the future.

We recognize that the Corps confronts budgetary challenges to meet its many responsibilities. With membership on Armed Services and the Appropriations Committees,

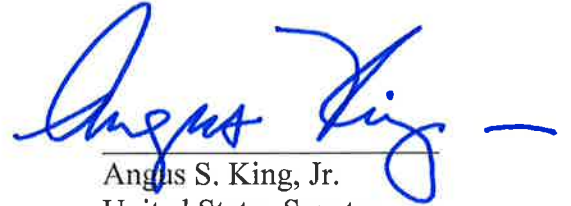
we stand willing and able to assist on future appropriations requirements to help the Corps meet its responsibilities related to this authorized federal navigable channel.

Thank you for your assistance and we look forward to your prompt response.

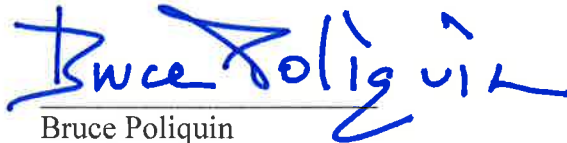
Sincerely,



Susan M. Collins  
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.  
United States Senator



Bruce Poliquin  
Member of Congress



Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress