

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

June 16, 2020

Ms. Bridget Bean
Assistant Administrator for Grant Programs
Grant Programs Directorate
Federal Emergency Management Agency
400 C Street SW, 3N
Washington, DC 20472

Dear Ms. Bean:

We write in support of an application submitted by the City of Bangor to the Federal Emergency Management Agency Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG) program. The City seeks to replace its outdated and noncompliant fire department radios with new, mobile communications equipment. These upgrades to the department's equipment would significantly support emergency response throughout the city and other communities in Penobscot County and enhance public safety in the region.

The City of Bangor provides public safety, rescue response, and mutual aid in the City and throughout the region. The department's radio equipment is over twenty years old and does not meet the current APCO P25 and SAFECOM guidance for emergency communication standards. The radios in use were not designed for firefighting and too often fail due to the wet and extreme temperature conditions associated with response to fire emergencies, undermining the safety of the firefighters and first responders.

According to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, inadequate communications is one of the top five leading causes of firefighter injury and/or death. The current radios limit interoperability with the department's local, regional, state, and federal mutual aid partners due to a lack of channels and digital capabilities. This limitation is particularly concerning as the department sees an increase in responses requiring seamless communication with various agencies, including fire, EMS, and law enforcement. If funded, the City plans to purchase new, portable and mobile communications equipment compliant with public safety and communications standards. Funding from the AFG program would greatly improve the safety of the City of Bangor and surrounding communities.

Thank you for your time and effort reviewing this proposal. We urge your careful consideration of this application, in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations, and ask that you please notify

[REDACTED] when a final decision has been made.

Sincerely,



Susan M. Collins
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator

Jared F. Golden
Member of Congress