

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 1, 2019

Senator Lamar Alexander
Subcommittee on Energy and Water
Committee on Appropriations
Room S-128, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Dianne Feinstein
Subcommittee on Energy and Water
Committee on Appropriations
Room S-128, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur
Subcommittee on Energy and Water
Committee on Appropriations
H-307, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Congressman Mike Simpson
Subcommittee on Energy and Water
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Kaptur, Ranking Member Simpson, Chairman Alexander and Ranking Member Feinstein:

We are writing to you today regarding the Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC), a rural economic development partnership in our districts that supports job-creating infrastructure projects. We urge you to include \$25 million in the Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20) Energy and Water Appropriations Bill for the NBRC, which would greatly benefit rural economic development in the Northeast. Specifically, we are requesting an allocation of \$4 million from base funds for forestry projects, and an additional \$1 million for the State Capacity Grant Program.

Reauthorized in the 2018 Farm Bill with bipartisan support, the Northern Border Regional Commission invests in the economic development of rural communities in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and New York. Regional Commissions in Appalachia and the Mississippi Delta make similar investments in their communities. There are nearly 700 counties included in the areas served by these three Commissions, which include areas hardest hit by massive manufacturing job losses.

NBRC aims to increase rural job opportunities and leverage federal funds to partner with private enterprises to revitalize areas around the Canadian border. Furthermore, NBRC grants have been utilized to expand business enterprises in rural communities, support workforce development initiatives and revitalize infrastructure along the northern border. In addition, the NBRC can provide assistance to states in creating comprehensive economic development plans that incorporate the resources and input of local governments and the general public to identify high-need project areas.

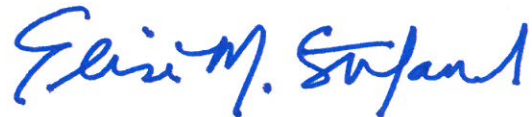
We strongly oppose the recent proposal by the Office of Management and Budget's FY20 Budget Blueprint to eliminate funding for the NBRC. The NBRC has served as a successful resource for innovative and entrepreneurial projects, and the elimination of funding for this Commission would have a negative impact on job creation in the Northeast. The NBRC is a smart and strategic use of taxpayer dollars and leverages significant private capital for projects in our states. It is clear that we need to be encouraging economic and community development and we commend the work of the subcommittee for previous support to this vital program.

We support \$25 million for NBRC and respectfully ask to include this amount in the FY20 Energy and Water Appropriations bill. Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to working together on this important program.

Sincerely,



Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress



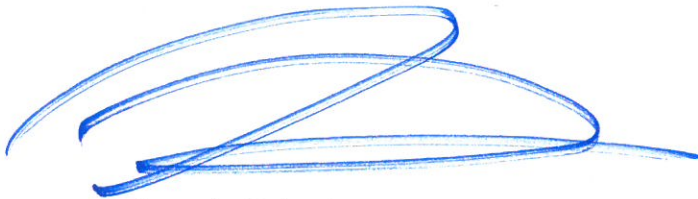
Elise Stefanik
Member of Congress



Peter Welch
Member of Congress



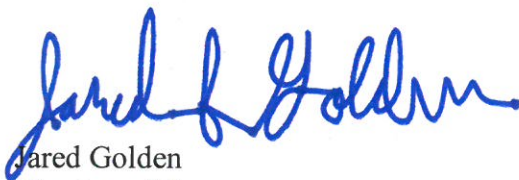
John Katko
Member of Congress



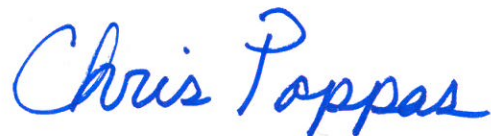
Antonio Delgado
Member of Congress



Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress



Jared Golden
Member of Congress



Chris Pappas
Member of Congress