



April 21, 2017

Dear Sen. Susan Collins, Sen. Angus King, Congresswoman Chellie Pingree and Congressman Bruce Poliquin,

cc: U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke

Over the past several years, the Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce has closely followed discussions concerning the possible establishment of a national park or national monument on lands in the Katahdin region, east of Baxter State Park. We received numerous presentations by many individuals representing all sides of this issue. Ultimately we decided to take a position honoring local choice for the communities immediately surrounding this monument/park issue.

However, on August 24, 2016, the debate was settled when the President of the United States, using his authority under the Antiquities Act, signed a proclamation establishing the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument. With that action, we consider this to be a settled matter and believe it should be left as such. Any attempt to overturn this decision would create new uncertainties at a time when communities and businesses in the Katahdin Region are coming together and moving forward with economic development plans.

The national monument represents only one element of a larger economic development strategy for the Katahdin region, but it is an important element. Real estate sales, outdoor recreation investments, and tourism promotion in the region all depend on certainty. And, investment in business that rely on the outdoors and use of outdoor resources will not occur without certainty. Any effort now to rescind the national monument would only reignite instability, rancor, and uncertainty for communities that strongly need forward momentum on economic progress.

For these reasons, the Board of Directors of the Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce opposes efforts to overturn the proclamation that established the national monument as that would undermine the expectations that have become settled in the region, and offer to assist our elected officials as well as the business community in the Katahdin Region as they incorporate the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument into a larger economic development strategy.

Sincerely,

Dr. Lee Speronis, Board Chair

