

Kirsten Brown Burbank  
1283 Salem Road  
Salem Twp., ME 04983

October 6, 2009

Susan M. Collins, Maine  
United States Senator  
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510-1904

Dear Senator Collins:

I am writing to you as a concerned citizen and resident of north Franklin County, Maine, from the Township of Salem, located in the heart of an area known by the Massachusetts Air National Guard as *Condor 1 and Condor 2* (flight training areas) in western Maine. I last wrote to you in November of 2007 with my concerns over the ANG's proposal to expand training areas and lower the flight level for these areas to 500 feet above ground level from the current status of 7,000 feet above sea level for the purposes of military flight training. I own livestock and operate a small farm in Salem and my husband makes his living here as a Registered Maine Guide and a logger. We have lived in unorganized territory for the past 11 years and currently have serious concerns about the struggling economy of the region, among other issues specific to our environment.

The Maine DOT, residents, and the Attorney General set forth in a letter from Governor Baldacci to Col. Albro, dated August 28, 2009, a thorough analysis of the ANG's recent Environmental Impact Study of our region, noting many flaws in the document that they clearly outlined. The Governor and his staff did an outstanding job in their determination of the EIS and Baldacci clearly stated that he believed the ANG had not met its burden of proof and requested that, "the public hearing be postponed for six to nine months in order to allow the ANG to conduct a more thorough analysis." The ANG has responded, saying that all concerns have been addressed in the current EIS with the exception of including the Fermata Report from the Brookings Institution.

A new public hearing date has been set for Saturday, November 14, 2009, at the University of Maine at Farmington from 2:00 to 6:00 p.m.

As a Professor of English for the University of Maine at Farmington and having taught research skills to budding scholars for many years, I read the ANG's Environmental Impact Study, abhorred with what I saw. The report was biased and one-sided and in my opinion, failed to include relevant and pertinent (current) objective findings that could have been easily identified and considered. Furthermore, the EIS does not adequately respond to the social and economical impact on an area increasingly dependent on local tourism.

I would like to ask for your support of Governor Baldacci's letter to the ANG and his request for a valid EIS. I would like to see sound data for ALL aircraft that would use the airspace to be included. I wonder if we can have your help in identifying the decision makers at the FAA and if you would support us by asking the FAA (in writing) to reject this EIS as written.

According to many experts, retired military personnel and area residents well educated on this topic who live in the Condor areas, the ANG has omitted and failed to analyze relevant facts, they have highlighted irrelevant statements, and they have relied on analytic methodologies that have resulted in significant uncertainties in data on which ANG findings and recommendations are based.

I want to know why this issue has returned again for the residents of our region after it was proposed and unanimously rejected in 1992 when Governor John McKernan was in office. What non-biased, credible and reliable study has the ANG conducted proving *no significant impact* on animal life in this pristine wilderness? What studies have been conducted proving *no significant impact* on eco and nature-based tourism and outdoor recreation? What studies have been conducted proving *no significant impact* on property values in the area? What studies have been conducted proving *no significant impact* on western Maine businesses and the need for relocation?

The ANG thinks that nobody lives in this wilderness, classified as quite possibly the "last great remaining wilderness in the eastern United States," and as having, "superior quality of place," as stated in an article in the Portland Press Herald, May 11, 2008. It seems to me, that finding *no significant impact* across the board helps the ANG to convince the FAA that making changes to the airspace over western Maine *forever* is no big deal and business as usual. The cumulative effect of all these *no significant impacts* add up to a significant impact on our area that has yet to be examined or understood.

Our future, our economic hopes and dreams, our cultural, historical and environmental assets and our peaceful way of life is at stake and I urge you to support the unified voice of the people of western Maine on this issue.

Thank you very much for your time and concern for this region and the people of western Maine.

Sincerely,

Kirsten Brown Burbank  
Salem Township, Maine