

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 1, 2020

Dear friends,

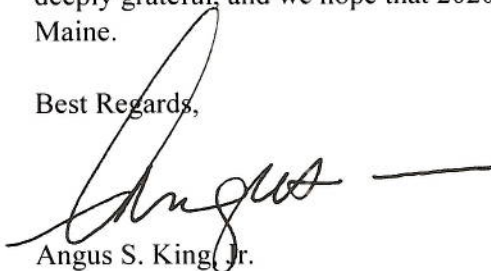
The beginning of a new year provides the opportunity to reflect on the progress of the past 12 months. If you've been watching cable TV, you might think that every waking moment of 2019 in Washington has been consumed by divisive, partisan issues – and while there's no shortage of those debates, there have also been opportunities for bipartisan cooperation. You sent me to the Senate to make the most of those opportunities, so as we enter into the New Year, I wanted to take a moment to update you on my efforts to work with members of both parties to make life better for the people of Maine.

One of my most important priorities this past year has been emphasizing preventive healthcare. Maine's distinction as the oldest state in the nation brings us wisdom, of course – but it also creates unique challenges, particularly relating to healthcare. The key to addressing these obstacles is being proactive, because the cheapest, safest medical procedure is the one that doesn't need to happen. That's why I've introduced legislation to incentivize healthier living, expand mental health screenings, and help more Americans access regular check-ups. We're making progress, but we've got a long way to go – and I'd like your help, because I know that the best ideas are the ones that come from families and communities on the front lines of these challenges. To strengthen this effort, I convened a policy forum on prevention in Bangor in October, which has already given me exciting new ideas that I'll carry with me into 2020. If you have additional thoughts on encouraging preventive healthcare, please share them with my office.

This year has also continued the growth of Maine's forest products industry – a key focus of my work to revitalize Maine's rural economy and communities. We've seen significant investment in mills across the state, creating good jobs to support rural Maine. I'm also pleased that the investments aren't just in our mills – the industry is thriving because of its commitment to innovation. We're fortunate to have the University of Maine's top-notch researchers exploring cutting-edge ways to use our forest resources, including capitalizing on the rise of 3D printing technology with the world's largest 3D printer. Combining this work with ongoing federal support, our vast forests, and Maine's dedicated workforce, I know that the future of this industry is bright, and I'll continue working to support it on all fronts.

I'm proud of all we've accomplished together this year, but even as I reflect on all that we've achieved, it is challenging to not think of the work left undone. It sometimes can be discouraging to watch these important priorities hang in limbo, but fortunately for me, encouragement is never far. After all, I get to live in Maine – which means I get to count Maine people as my neighbors and friends. I'm always struck by the kindness that our citizens show not only to me, but also to each other. This focus on collaboration and compassion is an inspiration, and it powers my efforts bring a little bit of Maine common sense to Washington. Thank you for all you do to for our state – Mary and I are deeply grateful, and we hope that 2020 will be a good year for you, your family, your community, and the State of Maine.

Best Regards,



Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator