

Steve Dobson  
SRD Rentals, Washburn  
LD 1141

To: The Joint Standing Committee on Transportation

From: Steve Dobson  
SRD Rentals/ Steve's Place

Re: LD 1141

Dear Committee members;

Thank you for the opportunity to express my thoughts on LD1141.

You may or may not know that tourism in Aroostook County is beginning to grow. I owned and operated two "mom & pop" motels in Aroostook County until November of 2021. In the summer of 2022, I built a small campground, which I intend to operate this season.

I am sure you are aware that tourism is one of, if not, the largest industries in the state. Can you name a business that is NOT tourism related? You cannot, because every business benefits from tourism. I feel the biggest reason for that growth is the Tourism Marketing Promotion Fund.

I support the idea of making bicycling a more accessible and safer sport. I used to see bicyclists come into my motels and be thrilled with the biking routes in Aroostook County.

However, I am vehemently opposed to taking One Million Dollars from the Tourism Marketing Promotional Fund. If you take these funds from the Maine Office of Tourism's marketing budget you are hurting the very people and organizations that can help the sport of bicycling grow. If MOT does not have enough money to promote tourism, then everyone is hurt. The more robust promotion program MOT has, the better it is for ALL businesses in the Great State of Maine.

I just recently attended the Governor's Conference on Tourism. MOT's new promotion program seeks to expose visitors to more parts of the state. They want more visitors to be drawn inland from the ocean areas. This is exactly what is needed to help the bicycling community. If you take a million dollars away from this program, the areas that the bicycling community enjoys is going to get less exposure. Will that be helpful? I think not!

Thank you for taking time to consider my thoughts in this matter before making your final decision.

Steve Dobson  
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Washburn, ME