

11 April 2023

To: Senator Chipman, Representative Williams, and Honorable members of the committee

From: Mira Levine

Re: Testimony in Support of Resolve, to Promote Passenger Rail for Commuters, LD 1170

My name is Mira Levine. I am a resident of Brunswick, and I attend school in Portland.

I am writing as a concerned student and citizen to urge you to vote “ought to pass” on LD 1170.

As a resident of Brunswick, I travel 32 miles to and from school every day. I am an avid oboist, and four times a week I attend rehearsals in Harpswell, Portland, and Gorham. These long commutes mean that transportation is always at the front of my mind. With two working parents who need their cars to get to their own jobs, I am often left with very limited options for a ride to an orchestra concert or a school trip. Please consider some of the reasons why voting “ought to pass” on LD 1170 would benefit other families and students like me:

- This bill will create a roadmap to **make passenger rail more accessible and attractive** to Maine commuters along our current passenger rail corridor, to and from Brunswick, Freeport, Portland, Saco-Biddeford, and Wells-Sanford.
- Even though the Downeaster is already essential to many who travel from southern Maine to the Boston area, many commuters and employers are unable to take advantage of passenger rail for day-to-day commuting. This bill is an opportunity to **meet the needs of a much wider pool of commuters**.
- Public transportation—including passenger rail—**increases accessibility** for Mainers of all ages, abilities, and financial situations. An easy-to-access option for long commutes makes it easier for us to connect with family and friends, **without worrying about how to do it**.
- Affordable public transit helps to **solve transportation inequity**. It increases our mobility, connects us with better job opportunities, and **reduces financial strain associated with car ownership**. We have the opportunity to eliminate the need for a car for long commutes and help families save money for other necessities.

Simply put, access to affordable, convenient transportation makes a world of difference for people like me who can’t always count on a way to get to where we need to go. With a dependable day-to-day option for long or irregular commutes, we all benefit from increased access to personal, professional, and academic opportunities. I urge you to vote “ought to pass” on LD 1170, and help bring more communities together and enrich our lives.

Respectfully submitted,

Mira Levine