



April 27, 2023

Testimony in Support of LD 1156

An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Promote the Design, Development and Maintenance of Trails for Outdoor Recreation and Active Transportation

Good afternoon Chairs Rotundo and Sachs, and distinguished members of the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee:

My name is Angela King, and I am the Advocacy Manager of the Bicycle Coalition of Maine (BCM). Our mission is to make Maine better and safer for bicycling and walking. On behalf of our more than 20,000 members and supporters, I am submitting this testimony in support of LD 1156 “An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Promote the Design, Development and Maintenance of Trails for Outdoor Recreation and Active Transportation,” to establish funding for trails throughout the state. Trails provide opportunities for public use as active transportation corridors and for recreational purposes.

The state of Maine is known for outdoor activities in every season of the year. Multi-use trails provide more opportunities for people to be outside in the state’s beautiful natural environment. The benefits of trails are evident in Maine and throughout the country, from improving the quality of life for residents to becoming destination places for tourists. Quality of life includes both public health and environmental health benefits, and tourism is an economic generator.

There are many trail projects in Maine that need only funding to proceed. Whether it is mountain bike trails in Carrabassett Valley, hiking trails in Bethel, or multi-use trails connecting Portland to points north and west on unused rail corridors, Maine is replete with opportunities to create trails that will enhance the quality of life and economic vitality of the state. But without funding, these projects proceed slowly, if at all. For this reason, the Coalition supports LD 1156.

The Bicycle Coalition of Maine is most supportive of trails as active transportation and recreational corridors for people walking and bicycling instead of driving motor vehicles. Since transportation contributes to more than half of Maine’s greenhouse gas emissions, supporting this bill aligns with the state’s climate goal of reducing carbon emissions. And as fossil fuel recreational vehicles are also significant emitters of greenhouse gases, BCM believes that non-motorized recreational trails should be prioritized for funding, to align with the goals of the state’s Climate Action Plan.

By passing LD 1156, the investment in trails will pay off through a reduction in carbon emissions, a rise in economic development, and improved public health.

Thank you for your time and service to the people of Maine.

Sincerely,

Angela King
Advocacy Manager

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