

Tom Miller  
Yarmouth  
LD 209

I am writing to testify in strong support of Rep. Bell's proposed amendment to LD 209, "Resolve, to Direct the Department of Transportation to Implement the Recommendation of the Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council." As a resident of Yarmouth, parent of 3 school-aged children, and someone who commutes to Portland and Scarborough daily, it's difficult to express how excited I am for the prospect of a traffic-separated trail connecting Portland to Auburn. One of the reasons we chose to move to Yarmouth after returning to the region was the number of traffic-separated trails connecting the town that allow us to enjoy biking/walking to the grocery store, school, soccer, little league, etc. I strongly support a trail-until-rail option that would enhance the options we already have in Yarmouth and extend for additional commuting distances. I also bike commute to Portland (although not as frequently as I would like) and have bike commuted in different cities throughout my life (including Portland, Boston, Salt Lake City); when I try to convert others to that option explaining that it's the most impactful activity I do for my mental health, one of the biggest barriers is fear of cars on roads with variable shoulders. For me it's all about removing barriers to chip away at active transportation and recreation and a trail corridor would do that. A trail corridor would enhance options for short distances with around town trips for kids and adults, as well as further distances for both recreation and non-recreation purposes. I therefore am writing in strong support of the recommendations of the Portland to Auburn Rail use Advisory Council, and to advocate for the DOT to permit the conversion of 26.5 miles of the Berlin Subdivision Rail Corridor to an interim bicycle and pedestrian trail. I've had the opportunity to sit on councils addressing trail development, and my understanding from the research I've been exposed to is that trail development always adds value to communities that invest. A bicycle and pedestrian trail will be a timely and crucial investment for our communities, our environment, and our health. Sincerely, Tom Miller, Yarmouth, ME