

The Joint Standing Committee on Transportation

Testimony from Jeff Candura
North Yarmouth, Maine

In Support Of

L.D. # 209: “An Act to Authorize an Interim Use Trail on the Berlin Subdivision Rail Corridor” and the proposed amendment: “Resolve, to Direct the Department of Transportation to Implement the Recommendation of the Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council”

Senator Chipman, Representative Williams, and Members of the Transportation Committee:

My name is Jeff Candura and I am a resident of North Yarmouth. I am writing to express my, and my family’s, 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.”

My wife and I have lived in North Yarmouth with our two children since 2018. We love the local trails in North Yarmouth, Cumberland, Gray, New Gloucester, Pownal, and Yarmouth and use them to walk our dog, run, ride bikes, and nordic ski. But venturing out on area roadways on a bike or on foot can mean taking your life into your own hands. High speed limits, limited shoulders, blind corners, and the presence of trucks from nearby gravel yards means that we have never allowed our children to ride their bike to a friend’s house that requires them to leave our sleepy dead-end street.

The rail trail that would travel through our community would be an incredible resource. Not only would it allow for safer recreation, but it would provide for a realistic transportation alternative to cars for navigating surrounding towns.

Rail trails have long proven to be huge benefits to the communities who host them. It gives young parents a safe place to walk with children. Cyclists and runners have long stretches of uninterrupted trail where they don’t need to worry about traffic. Aging residents can comfortably walk without venturing off road where the footing is less stable. Commuters, especially with the growth of Ebikes, would now have an alternative mode of transportation for commutes into Yarmouth or Portland. I fail to see a downside to this investment in our communities.

Having this rail trail through my community would be an incredible resource for me, my family, and my community.

I strongly urge an Ought To Pass vote and look forward to joining you out on the trail in the future!

Thank you.

Jeff Candura