

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

I am strongly against LD 404: Resolve, to Direct the Department of Transportation to Implement the Recommendations of the Mountain Division Rail Use Advisory Council.

The Railroads in Maine are part of an International General Railroad System. This transportation network includes the Mt. Division, the St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railroad (Berlin Subdivision), and all those rail lines owned by Maine state taxpayers. These lines are now under attack by Rails to Trails groups.

Removing existing lines from the system, piece by piece, corridor by corridor is not good transportation policy. The removal of any railroad infrastructure will cause the lines to be classified as abandoned. A line can not be abandoned without proper federal approval. And, according to U.S. law, the rights to the land under abandoned rail tracks remain with the adjacent landowners.

As an abutting landowner to the Berlin Subdivision line I will claim the rights to the property that becomes abandoned, and assist others in claiming ownership of the Mountain Division land.

The Rails to Trails groups are pushing trail plans that are rushing past all the work that needs to be done to assess the real value of an International Rail network. Please do not rush and make a tragic mistake. Don't rip up rail tracks!

Please vote LD 404 Ought Not to Pass

Thank you,

Joseph Kumiszczka