

Stephen Bush  
Yarmouth  
LD 209

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Yarmouth, Maine

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

My name is Stephen Bush and I am a resident of Yarmouth. 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."

Having a rail trail that connects Portland with Yarmouth and other surrounding communities would be an invaluable resource to me, my family, and the entire region.

It would allow me to commute to Portland by bike safely, without having to worry about the dangers of sharing lanes with cars. I used to commute from Yarmouth to Portland along route 88 but it did not feel safe and I had numerous close calls with distracted or aggressive drivers.

My family also bikes regularly for exercise but we don't feel safe riding with our young children (ages 10 and 4) along roads with cars. As a result, we have to drive to rail trails in other communities, including in other states, to enjoy the safety and peace-of-mind of biking on dedicated trails without cars. We would love to be able to access a rail trail from our own community without having to drive to a trail.

Having a rail trail that is accessible to so many communities with large populations would encourage more people to get outdoors, get exercise, and walk/bike to their destinations instead of using motor vehicles. This would improve the quality of life, health of individual and the community, and reduce emissions from cars.

I'm confident it would also benefit small businesses and the local economy by encouraging visitors to the towns that this rail trail connects.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Stephen Bush