



P.O. BOX 334 · FRYEBURG, MAINE 04037 · TEL: 207-935-4440

May 3, 2023

State of Maine Legislature

RE: **Mountain Division LD 404, LD 1450 and LD 209**
Fryeburg, Maine

To our State Legislators,

The Eastern Slope Airport Authority (ESAA) is writing to voice its opposition to the above-referenced legislation to remove rail infrastructure to create recreational bike paths. ESAA operates, maintains and manages the Eastern Slope Regional Airport, which serves the White Mountain Valley and western Maine regions. It is our mission to support economic development in its many forms.

In this time of rapidly changing dynamics surrounding energy, removing the possibility for a highly efficient method of transporting goods and people around our state would be unwise. If the railroad is removed it would never be feasible to build a new one due to costs and environmental constraints. Preserving the potential for multi-modal solutions, business recruitment, expansion, and retention and other future possibilities that serve the region are of utmost importance.

We ask that you oppose this legislation and instead pursue a solution that includes both uses. A bike path that runs alongside the existing track would preserve the opportunity for future development and use of the track while providing for the recreational use of the corridor as well.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Don Thibodeau

Don Thibodeau
Chair
Eastern Slope Airport Authority

Allison Navia
Airport Manager
Eastern Slope Regional Airport