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Portland
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1. Those on the AFA committee that have conflicts of interest should recuse themselves (Rotundo, Bennett).
2. Rep. Collings misled the committee with exaggerated statistics. Ridership on the Downeaster is NOT 500,000/year.
3. No mode of transportation can survive on ridership for funding in any substantive way. Freight is the only service that can be self sustaining - barely.
4. Any rail line that leads to Interstate Commerce immediately falls under the Federal Interstate Commerce laws and the Surface Transportation Board. The State loses control of such transactions.
5. None of the rails in Maine could be used for high-speed rail without a severe and expensive restoration.
6. As one witness stated, there was interest from the North Conway Railway - however the TRA committee already voted ONTP on the relevant bill.
7. In order to raise money for rail improvements, the State could readily sell the rail for which this bill seeks funding and then use those funds to improve the rails in collaboration with the private interests. Maintenance of these rail lines should not become the burden of Maine taxpayers - in addition to the fares they will pay to ride these rails.
8. You have been provided a lot of false information.