

Patricia Barber  
Hiram  
LD 402

1/23/2024

Testimony in Support for LD 402  
From Patty Barber Hiram

Senator Chipman, Representative Crafts, and the Members of the Transportation Committee

I am Patty Barber from Hiram Maine and I am testifying in support of LD 402, "An Act to Change Maine's Transportation Laws".

Last session you may recall LD 406-the Rail Use Corridor Vision Plan- which outlined a process for a rail-centered evaluation of our State Owned railroads to complement the existing trail-based RUAC process.

That bill had a strange path through the legislature. It was Tabled Until Later, Postponed Indefinitely and in July died in the chaos that characterized the end of the first session.

LD 406 was a good bill. Then-Mayor Kate Snyder testified in support of it, and both NNEPRA and MDOT testified Neither For Nor Against stating that rail expansion was a goal of both organizations.

At that time, MDOT offered the sponsors an amendment-the wording of which is the text of LD 402.

All LD 402 does is add an extra layer of safety to be sure all reasonable rail uses will be considered before any State Owned tracks are pulled up. This is intended to be in addition to the RUAC process- it doesn't change the RUAC wording or intent at all. LD 402 is also consistent with the Maine State Rail Plan, and the State Rail Preservation Act.

Our railroad infrastructure is a valuable State asset. Every use should be fully evaluated to be sure we are utilizing that infrastructure in the best way possible. LD 402 does just that.

I urge you all to support LD 402.

Thank You,  
Patty Barber