

City of Portland | Office of the Mayor and City Council

Mark Dion, Mayor



To: Sen. Ben Chipman, Rep. Lydia Crafts, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation

From: Mark Dion, City of Portland Mayor

Date: February 5, 2024

Re: In Support of LD 860 (*An Act to Identify the Railroad Lines from Portland to Bangor as a Major Corridor and to Fund a Feasibility Study*)

Testimony in Support of LD 860 “An Act to Identify the Railroad Lines from Portland to Bangor as a Major Corridor and to Fund a Feasibility Study”

Senator Chipman, Representative Craft, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation:

I write to you on behalf of the City of Portland’s Legislative/Nominating Committee in Support of LD 860, An Act to Identify the Railroad Lines from Portland to Bangor as a Major Corridor and to Fund a Feasibility Study.

Based on the City of Portland’s recent involvement with multiple rail-related studies and initiatives, including passenger rail feasibility to Lewiston and the Portland-to-Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council, it has become clear that a guiding vision of the future use of critical state corridors is necessary, for everything from passenger transportation to freight to active transportation connections.

The actions included by this legislation would provide the high-level analysis needed to move the State of Maine on a path toward sustainable community development and away from auto-centric planning; this shift is essential to an effective, forward-looking course as we navigate climate and housing crises. In addition, it would help answer lingering questions regarding the process that arose from the Rail Use Advisory Committee effort in 2022.

Thank you for your consideration.