Philip Garwood
Gardiner
LD 29

My name is Philip Garwood, and I am writing in support of LD 29. I am a resident of Gardiner, Maine. I am also the Chairperson of the Board of Supervisors of the Kennebec River Rail Trail (KRRT). The KRRT is a 6.5 mile bicycle/pedestrian trail that runs between the City of Augusta and the City of Gardiner, connecting the four communities of Augusta, Farmingdale, Gardiner and Hallowell.

The KRRT was designed and constructed in the Railroad Right-of-Way (ROW) of the Lower Road corridor as a trail with rail facility, because the Lower Road was considered an active rail corridor. The trail with rail construction created two major constraints on the KRRT. The first is that two sections of the trail had to be built to a 6-foot width rather than the full 10-foot width of the remaining areas. The second constraint was that, due to the narrowness of the ROW through downtown Hallowell, there was insufficient room to construct a trail through that area. As a consequence, users of the trail are forced to travel along Route 201 through the busy and sometimes congested business district of Hallowell.

The KRRT is a well-used and much-loved amenity enjoyed by the people of the capital area as well as many others who come to the Capital Area to walk or ride. The approval of LD 29 would allow the Board of Supervisors to make significant improvements to our existing KRRT facility by widening the full width to 10 feet, and by using the railroad ROW through the City of Hallowell. Placing the trail on the ROW would increase the safety of trail users, who would no longer have to negotiate through the Rte. 201 corridor through downtown Hallowell. An additional benefit of approving LD 29 would be to enable the development of a wonderful off-road recreation, travel and commuter amenity that would connect the Brunswick/Topsham area with the Capital Area. This would make for a very positive use to an almost completely unused rail corridor.

Again, I urge you to approve LD 29.

Thank you for your consideration.