

Dear Members of the Transportation Committee,

My name is Eileen Sylvan Johnson, and I am a resident of Bowdoin.

I believe strongly in the need for active transportation options for Maine communities. The Merrymeeting Rail Trail provides such an option. The trail provides an important connection between existing, well-used trail networks for bicyclists and pedestrians. As an avid cyclist who often bikes to work, I would use the trail for both recreation and potential commuting.

This trail can be one of the many destinations selected by tourists to the region. With the option of bringing bicycles on the Amtrak Downeaster to Brunswick, tourists would have the opportunity to combine rail and trail. I have taken advantage of multimodal transportation options, including taking my bicycle on the Downeaster to ride the southernmost sections of the Eastern Trail as well as in other states, taking my bicycle on Amtrak to enjoy multiday bike rides along the Erie Canal trail in upstate New York. The trail also provides opportunities for families with young children to enjoy off-road walking and biking. Having access to trails provides health benefits for residents.

I'd like to thank the committee members for their consideration and encourage them to vote "Ought to Pass"

Sincerely,

Eileen Sylvan Johnson