



# Maine Conservation Voters

*Inform. Vote. Protect.*

**Testimony in support of LD30, Resolve, Directing the Department of Transportation to Implement the Recommendations of the Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Regarding the Rail Line from Portland to Yarmouth**

**March 4, 2025**

Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts and distinguished member of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation, my name is Cathy Breen. I am the Director of Government Affairs at Maine Conservation Voters, a statewide non-profit organization with 13,000 members and supporters that is building a just, thriving future for all by acting on the climate crisis, protecting the environment, and safeguarding our democracy. I'm speaking in favor of the LD30, *Resolve, Directing the Department of Transportation to Implement the Recommendations of the Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council Regarding the Rail Line from Portland to Yarmouth.*

This bill takes one more step in the long journey to implement the recommendations of the Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council (PARUAC).<sup>1</sup> Formed as a result of legislation in 2021, the PARUAC conducted public meetings, completed site visits, responded to public comments and issued recommendations. This bill directs the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) to remove 9.95 miles of state-owned inactive existing railroad track along the section known as the Berlin Subdivision between the City of Portland and the Town of Yarmouth, subject to available funding resources. Under the State Railroad Preservation and Assistance Act, any track removal or other change for nonrail use is considered "interim" in nature and rail corridors are to be preserved for future rail use.<sup>2</sup>

Maine Conservation Voters supports this Resolve for several reasons:

- Expanding access to off-road transportation options along the busy I-295 corridor from Freeport to Portland will have several benefits such as reducing vehicle miles traveled in gas-powered vehicles, making the highway corridor less crowded

---

<sup>1</sup><https://www.maine.gov/mdot/ofps/docs/parac/2023/Portland%20to%20Auburn%20Rail%20Use%20Advisory%20Council%20Summary%20and%20Recommendations%20Final%202.1.23.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://legislature.maine.gov/statutes/23/title23sec7107.html>

during high volume times of day, and reducing the continuing pressure on the City of Portland to accommodate more and more parked cars. This is consistent with MCV's goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Maine.

- It respects the State Railroad Preservation and Assistance Act, preserving the state's authority to return the corridor to rail use in the future should the need arise. This is consistent with MCV's hope for more public transit options in the future.

Thank you for your consideration. MCV urges "Ought to Pass" on LD30.