



CITY OF BANGOR

Joint Standing Committee on Transportation

Testimony in Support of LD 487 – “Resolve, Directing the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority to Apply for Federal Funding for the Purpose of Identifying the Rail Corridor Connecting Portland to Orono as an Intercity Passenger Rail Corridor”

March 6, 2025

Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation. I am Joseph Leonard, City Councilor for the City of Bangor, and I am providing testimony in support of LD 487, “Resolve, Directing the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority to Apply for Federal Funding for the Purpose of Identifying the Rail Corridor Connecting Portland to Orono as an Intercity Passenger Rail Corridor.”

Bangor, Maine’s third largest city, believes a balance of travel options is the key to continuing and expanding our region’s prosperity. Just like Southern Maine, we wish to be directly connected to the Northeast Corridor.

The City of Bangor invests in our local transit system to provide options for all our residents, to support our downtown and to become more climate friendly. We believe a long-distance rail connection is a vital part of the transportation needs for the economic development of our city and region. Further, improvement of the existing CSX rail line to passenger rail standards would also support improved freight movement, increasing economic development opportunities and allowing Maine products to be competitively exported to the entire nation.

We have shown our support for studies and planning to improve transit through our monetary support of LD 227, and our testimony in support of LD 860. LD 487 is the next level to secure funding for a detailed feasibility study that would look at all benefits, including economic, along with the ridership needs as well as actual costs. We hope that one day Bangor and the surrounding region can become truly integrated by passenger rail service with the rest of the state and nation.

On behalf of the Bangor City Council, I urge you to pass LD 487 to allow the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority to apply for federal funding through the Federal Railroad Administration’s Corridor Identification and Development Program to identify this as an extension of the existing viable rail corridor.

Thank you for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to reach out with questions.

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Joseph Leonard
City of Bangor
LD 487

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