

Kat Taylor Testimony in Favor 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

Thursday, March 6, 2025

Good Morning Members of the Transportation Committee:

My name is Kat Taylor and I am a resident and property owner in Argyle Twp. located about 20 miles north of Bangor.

I have been following the possibility of rail service from Bangor to other parts of the state for some time. I have supported Senator Baldacci in his efforts to make this happen.

Below is an email thread I sent to my local representatives when Senator Baldacci put forth a bill last session.

To: Dill, James" <James.Dill@legislature.maine.gov>,
"Tipping, Mike" <Mike.Tipping@legislature.maine.gov>,
Laurie Osher <Laurie.Osher@legislature.maine.gov>,
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Bangor could serve as a hub for rail radiating out to surrounding areas.

Along with passenger transportation, a train could also serve as a ferry service for passenger vehicles.

Providing car transport along with the passengers to a destination would encourage rail use. They do it in WA state with Puget Sound ferries allowing Seattle workers to live on the Olympic Peninsula and commute.

Local Rail would **allow families to visit without long treks, disabled and elderly** to go to **medical resources** normally out of their reach and **students** to attend schools without the need for parking.

If the rail service ran down the median of I95 then the Park and Ride lots could serve as depots to access rail for ferrying as well as carpooling.

Rail service would also alleviate the housing crunch since our commuters could live farther out from larger metropolitan areas and use the train to commute like NY, NJ and CT do, bringing much needed revenue to smaller towns.

If commuters choose not to use their personal vehicle, shuttle service could run from train depots into the city proper much like airports have express shuttles to resort hotels.

People traveling from out of state could ride in comfort on a train and use their personal vehicle at the destination on vacation trips alleviating congestion along roads, like 295, I95 and Route 1 for people visiting the coast.

This would also **benefit EV's users** who have to recharge on long trips and promote tourism to northern Maine if rail extends beyond Bangor. In fact charging stations could be part of the service; arrive fully charged both in car and body.

But at least **people heading for Baxter State Park or the Allagash Waterways would start out fresh from Bangor and reach their destination quicker** putting less wear and tear on roads and lessen traffic in communities that are not destinations.

Trains could also be destinations, providing scenic rides to remote areas normally long distances away by car or inaccessible by air. Fall foliage leaf peepers could enjoy the view without the hassle of watching the road.

And think how **Augusta would benefit** if legislators and staffers, who live quite a distance away, could ride the train and take a shuttle to the capitol. Who knows, you might even work out issues on the train before you get to work.

If we don't expand public transportation it will much harder to reach our climate goals.

Northern Mainers are reluctant to embrace EV's for a variety of reasons; the main one is distance.

We have limited buses **in suburban and rural areas so people are forced to drive cars**. Trains just make sense especially if they run along existing highways.

I hope you don't give up on this idea. Maybe with the ferrying service added to the idea would gain more public support.

I'd be happy to do research for you and testify in support.

Respectfully,

Kat Taylor
Argyle Twp.