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Although that I am not a Maine Resident but a New Hampshire Resident. However, I believe that because the railroad line in question does enter the state that I reside in that my testimony should hold water. I strongly implore that the State of Maine and that this honorable committee reject any funding to turn the Maine half of the Mountain Division into a rail trail. It is in my firm belief that recreational rail trails bring no money whatsoever to the economy or the state. It really is such a waste of money. I am one of a few millennials at 28 years old who is greatly concerned about the decreasing job amounts due to the technological advances of our culture. This rail trails is going to take so many jobs away and prevent any potential development of industries in smaller more rural areas.

To bring jobs, I implore that the state of Maine to allow CSX and Conway Scenic Railroad both active railroads who still have use for this line. I ask the state of Maine to please seriously consider Conway Scenic Railroad's expressed interest in using the New Hampshire and Maine portion of the Mountain Division. This would bring more jobs which would benefit the local economy with the influx of freight. Although I admit that restoring a rail line to service is an expensive task, but in my opinion that is well worth the state funds as opposed on spending it for a rail trail that has no economic benefit whatsoever. Local convenience stores might make a few dollars here or there, but that wouldn't nearly develop or benefit the local economy. How does a bicycle or pedestrian benefit the local economy?

Restoring the Mountain Division for Freight and ridership opportunities would take a long time to recuperate the state's expenses. However the state of Maine would eventually get its money back and eventually turn a profit. With a rail trail it's literally like throwing money away. It's such a poor utilization of state funds, and it's not creating more jobs. I would also implore that the State of Maine and this Committee along with its honorable members would also consider meeting in the middle by going for rails with trails as that has been proven to be a benefit to local communities as well. I think that would appease both those who support a trail and further rail service. Also more rail service would reduce the amount of truck and regular traffic congestion as opposed to a rail trail. There are tourist who come to Portland, Maine and are interested in visiting the White Mountains of New Hampshire, it would greatly reduce their expenses if they rode a train as opposed to riding a bus which can only hold a limited amount of people at once as opposed to holding hundreds at once in a long passenger coach. Having tourist commune by train from Portland to North Conway, NH would also develop the tourist industry for both Maine and New Hampshire. I want to conclude my testimony by again reiterating to the state of Maine and this committee to listen to Conway Scenic Railroad's proposal to start passenger and freight opportunities from Portland to their portion of the Mountain Division. Vermont Rail Systems is looking to restart service on the Whitefield portion of the Mountain Division. I really hope that the state and this committee looks at the big picture under these very unique circumstances to allow the restoration of the entire Mountain Division for active rail service which would greatly benefit the local economy. I again implore this committee to please not fund this ludicrous rail trail venture. Thank you for considering my testimony. God bless.

Corey Burrell