

A Connected Maine: My Strong Support for LD676

As an avid hiker and outdoor enthusiast residing in Maine, I wholeheartedly support LD 676. This bill represents a crucial step towards completing a remarkable recreational asset for our state and its communities.

The proposed allocation to replace the tracks on the 31-mile rail corridor between Fryeburg and Standish is an investment in more than just infrastructure; it's an investment in our quality of life. Having personally enjoyed the existing sections of the Mountain Division Trail, particularly the family-friendly and accessible Fryeburg segment, I can attest to the immense value these trails bring. The flat, paved surface with convenient benches caters to individuals of all ages and abilities, from young children and seniors to those using strollers or wheelchairs.

Currently, the beautiful Fryeburg section stands isolated from the established Sebago to Sea Trail sections in Windham, Standish, and Portland. LD676 offers the vital link to bridge this 30-mile gap. Imagine the incredible opportunity this will create: a continuous, scenic trail stretching from Casco Bay to North Conway, New Hampshire! This completed Mountain Division Trail will not only be a haven for hikers like myself but also draw tourists and boost the economies of the nine communities along its route.

I sincerely commend the Mountain Division Rail Use Advisory Council for their recommendations and the Maine DOT and Mountain Division Alliance for their past work on the Fryeburg segment. Passing LD676 is the logical next step to realize the full potential of this exceptional trail system.

Therefore, I strongly urge the legislature to vote "Ought to Pass" on LD676. Let's connect our communities, enhance our recreational opportunities, and create a lasting legacy for future generations.

Sincerely,
Lyman Stuart
Standish, Maine