

Casey Goodrich  
Monroe  
LD 676

I oppose this portion of the bill and the overall efforts to remove the rails on the Mountain Division line for a trail because it is a lost economic opportunity for the state of Maine as well as the surrounding New England states. Removing the vital corridor that many large businesses can utilize for their goods and has the potential to create new employment opportunities.

I believe that removal of the tracks would hinder economic growth in western Maine because it will force any potential rail shipper to have to ship by trucks which are most costly to the shipper and more damaging to the roads. It also has the potential passenger corridor between Portland and Montreal which brings in more revenue for the state. With Vermont Railways taking over the western end of the Mountain division and bringing customers back online and the Conway Scenic wanting to expand it lends itself for another opportunity of economic growth that would be missed upon if the tracks were removed.

From my understanding there is a railroad that has expressed interest in running trains on this line, and as per the Rail Preservation Act any non-rail use is to be treated as interim until a railroad presents itself. As the Conway Scenic Railroad has presented itself, any trail use whether planned or constructed must cease while the railroad is heard out.

I believe that rail with trail is the best case scenario in this situation as some of the right of way has trails already established beside them so to continue that would be more beneficial for both rail and trail.

Thanks to the committee members and I urge you to vote "Ought Not to Pass" on LD 676