

Eliot Wiersma
Hillsdale, New York
LD 676

I'm writing to oppose LD 676. Removing the Mountain Division rail line and replacing it with a trail would eliminate a vital transportation corridor from the western portion of the state for good, which would cut the region off from economic growth and prosperity. There is a railroad company, the Conway Scenic Railroad, currently interested in operating trains on this line. As per the Rail Preservation Act, any non-rail use is to be treated as interim until a railroad presents itself. Since a railroad has presented itself, it would be unwise to waste the opportunity to use an existing transportation corridor for a trail when a railroad line would serve the community in more beneficial ways. In addition to serving the local community, this line is a part of the national rail network, and it would be a disservice to the nation, much less the state of Maine, to remove this railroad from the network. Converting this railroad to a trail would be wasting taxpayer dollars on destroying a railroad line that could be better used for the purpose it was actually meant for. I'd like to thank the committee and urge you to vote Ought Not to Pass on LD 676.