

April 3, 2025

Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation,

My name is Reba Walton and I live in Steep Falls, Maine. I have been a user of the Mountain Division Trail since I was a young child. I have many fond memories on the trail with my family. I now live less than a mile from where the Mountain Division line is, but I have to drive to either of the two completed sections in order to use the trail. I am eagerly awaiting the day where I can get on the Mountain Division Trail so close to my house to enjoy many bike rides and walks with my family.

I support LD 676 because:

- Building the trail to connect the existing finished sections will create a **great resource that our community members** will use to benefit their **health and wellbeing**.
- The trail will also serve as a resource to drive **economic growth** in the community since more people will be in the area looking for food and beverages. People using the trail would also stop at shops along the way. Even the creation of the trail itself will bring in jobs.
- I have visited many rail trails in various states and have seen first hand how the trails bring people to an area to positively impact a community.
- **Maine DOT's Rail Use Advisory Council (RUAC) voted 11:1 for the conversion of 31 miles of existing railroad track to an interim trail-until-rail.**
- In July of 2023, LD 404 codified into law the recommendations of the RUAC.
- Over 200 people offered testimony in support of LD 404 Letters of support for LD404.
- LD 676 will allow MDOT to spend federal grant funding on building the trail from Fryeburg to Standish, thereby bringing substantial economic development opportunities to this rural area.

I thank committee members for their consideration and urge them to vote: "Ought to Pass"

Thank you,

Reba Walton