

Greetings. Thank you for making the opportunity to allow me to speak regarding LD209, as I support the interim conversion to trail of the Berlin Subdivision Rail Corridor.

I am Harry Nelson and have been a resident of North Yarmouth, Maine for the past 44 years.

In 2007 a small tech company I work for moved out of a farm house in Edgecomb that our company's founder owned, and we moved to a 'real office' in Yarmouth. I love bike riding, and I'm happy to say that for at least 7 months of the year I commuted by bike down Route 115 to my office - a short 20 minute commute.

Our company continued to grow, and in 2013 we moved to a much larger office in Scarborough. My 6 mile commute turned into 22 miles, and while I have to admit that the frequency of my bike commuting diminished substantially, I still tried to keep it up a couple of times a week.

Riding a bike to work is mentally, physically, ethically, and environmentally the best way to commute. And it is most wonderful way to start and end the work day.

My ride to Scarborough included portions of the Eastern Trail in South Portland and Scarborough – a 'somewhat' urban trail – making it so much more pleasurable for me than riding on the roads. But on September 26, 2016 my bike commuting days came to abrupt end, as I was hit by a pick up truck on Highland Avenue in Scarborough. Some of you may know that the Eastern Trail - a repurposed rail line - is not contiguous and relies on state roads, Highland Avenue being one of them. I suffered a concussion, amnesia, and a broken back. And I gave up commuting by bike, and my love for cycling.

Hundreds of commuters will use the trail every day to get from Yarmouth to Portland, and perhaps from farther towns. This is an opportunity to create a safe, flat and secure multipurpose pedestrian trail that we must embrace and make happen.

Thank you.

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