

Testimony Supporting LD209 Thursday May 18th, 2023

My name is Catherine Chamberlain and I live in Falmouth, Maine; formerly of Brewster (Cape Cod), Massachusetts. I am here to show my support for the Casco Bay Trail vision.

For fifteen years I lived on Cape Cod, home of the Cape Cod Rail Trail (CCRT). The trail is very popular for families and tourists visiting the area as well as residents and commuters. Many enjoy the safety, convenience and beauty of the CCRT year round.

On the CCRT there are several places to stop for a meal, refreshments or a little shopping along the way. We would begin a ride by saying "let's go to the Sparrow" for coffee or maybe La Boulangerie down the trail another fifteen miles. The CCRT is a true gem.

I am excited about the plan to create something similar in the Casco Bay area. The trail will facilitate connection of individual towns through the development of this off road trail. Trail users will find that a sense of community is formed when they stop to visit someone they recognize or view a wild animal, plant or flower. Trail users tend towards a relaxed friendliness. Maybe a local coffee shop or ice cream bar will become the "go to" place.

The consistent grade of a rail trail aids in accessibility for people of varying mobility. Removing the distraction and danger of riding on the roads lets people relax and enjoy their surroundings. Families can go on outings and children can practice their walking or riding skills. People who commute by bike will be able to do so safely. And the benefits of exercise can never be over emphasized.

The Casco Bay Trail is a win win vision. I can't wait to say "meet you at the trail".