

From: Ellen Fogg pinehall@yahoo.com
Subject: Rails with trails - Opposing LD 28, 30, 511 and supporting LD 847
Date: Mar 3, 2025 at 11:01:42 PM
To: Jim Libby Jim.Libby@legislature.maine.gov
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james.white@legislature.maine.gov

Dear Senator Libby,

You know that I support improving the rails of the Mountain Division to support use by a viable train company who has proposed running on this route between Portland and Fryeburg. The Mountain Division Trail exists beside the rails already between Standish and Windham. I advocate that these Maine-owned rails be saved and upgraded. A Mountain Division Trail could be extended beside the tracks. The rail route next to Sebago Lake is grandfathered for train travel only and should be protected.

Passenger trains and freight trains have fostered economic development around stations. Brunswick Station has been a great success with restaurants, businesses, and housing. Such economic development will occur where new stations are added in Maine.

I oppose the ripping up of Maine state owned rails proposed in LD 29, 30 and 511. Rails with Trails maintain transportation options. There are trains waiting to run on these tracks.

I support LD 847 which has been submitted to the legislature directs NNEPRA to apply for funding through the federal corridor ID program to obtain the designation of the rail line between Portland and Orono, through Auburn, Lewiston, Waterville and Bangor. Think how many students and workers would choose to ride the Downeaster to and from these cities. Passengers trains and freight trains take pressure off I-95 and I-295.

As a retired travel agent, I assure you that clients had been asking me for decades when the train was coming back to Maine and now when to a city close to them?! Over the past 50 years, travelers have flocked to Amtrak Travel Shows in our office to learn more about traveling by train. I have attended meetings of public groups working to bring a train to Lewiston, Auburn, Bethel and even Montreal.

There is great interest in traveling by train through Maine and the Northeast. Baby boomers and young people are looking to travel easier and in a more environmentally friendly fashion. Trains are accessible for those who have difficulty walking, climbing steps or even using a wheelchair. Children love family train trips with all the space, getting lunch from the cafe car and seeing the countryside on their way to a museum, sporting event, the beach or to visit grandparents!! It is fun to see the MSMT actors arrive in Brunswick by train.

There is much more interest in traveling comfortably by train than you can imagine. I have ridden great trains in China, Italy, Germany, Spain and Egypt. Hard to believe that I cannot get to the state capitol of Maine by train....yet!! If you build it, they will come!!

Please oppose ripping up our rails!!! Rails, with trails, make sense! Please support efforts to expand trains Portland to Orono, Brunswick to Augusta and Brunswick to Rockland. See you on the train!

Cordially,

Ellen Fogg

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TrainRiders Northeast board member

Sent from my iPhone