

Greetings, my name is Jack Duffin. I stand before you today urging you to not pass LD 29, 30, or 511, which would forever eradicate the possibility of rail service on two key corridors in the state of Maine: the Lower Road through the state capitol, and the Berlin Subdivision stemming from the state's largest city, Portland.

I must concede to something: I am a New Hampshireite. Why does a granite stater care about the preservation of the railroad system in a place he does not live? Simple: the second word of railroad system. "System". Tracks do not stop at the end of their mileposts: they span through towns, cities, state lines, even national borders. Look no further than reefers of lobster bait being shipped to Rockland from fisheries on the west coast to understand this fact.

When you remove any mile of rail from any segment of track, you remove business and commuting opportunities not just along that section of track, but in other parts of the country as well. Maine has done itself a disservice analyzing these lines as isolated portions of rail as opposed to their part in a broader system. I understand as well these trails are painted as "interim", but the price of reinstatement of these lines once removed become expensive to the point of practical impossibility.

I instead stand for the possibility of rail-with-trail along these corridors, for a myriad of reasons. Principle among these, if these trails are to be considered "interim" in nature, would they not have to be removed if rails return? What's the benefit to future generations of a temporary trail?

I ask that Maine truly consider the legitimate value of these valuable transportation assets before ripping them up, and I thank you for your time in considering this matter.