



**MAINE  
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Senator Tim Nangle, Senate Chair  
Representative Lydia Crafts, House Chair  
Joint Standing Committee on Transportation

Re: Oppose LD 29, LD 30, and LD 511

Bicycles and trains belong together.

Both are ways to conserve energy while encouraging high demand housing in compact, walkable, bicycle friendly mixed-use communities centered around high-quality transit systems. This makes it possible to live a lower-stress life without complete dependence on a car for mobility and survival and provides a boost to rebuild our city and town centers in Maine.

The term 'active transportation' will be heard a great deal today. Per the US DOT website, "most trips (52%) made are under three miles, which is a short distance perfect for biking, walking, and rolling (Active Transportation)". Their statements are explicit that bicycles "can make destinations that are just a little too far for walking, such as **transit stations, easier to reach.**" It goes on to state that "FTA grant programs are available to help cities and towns invest in pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, which improves mobility and **helps people access public transportation.**" However, LD29, LD30 and LD511 would remove the public transportation option.

Unfortunately, the bills in front of you are not designed to improve connectivity within a neighborhood. They are designed to destroy the option of future public transportation options connecting communities that are far more than three miles away by removing the railroad tracks in key corridors.

It is the desire of the Maine Rail Group and the many Maine citizen petition signers to encourage the creation of rail WITH trail allowing access to hikers and bicyclists to towns and cities along the already existing network of long-distance rail corridors.

The Maine Rail Group knows local Maine rail operators that are interested in maintaining both the "Lower Road" and the SLR (Portland to Auburn) Line for local freight service, recreational uses such as rail bikes, train tourist excursions and allow for the use for

scheduled efficient clean all weather rail service in the future. It is building for the future and creating a system for all Mainers in all weather.

The Maine Department of Transportation has in the past collaborated with communities such as Augusta, Hallowell, Fryeburg, and Standish to create rail WITH trail. But in the RUACs Maine DOT has presented dollar amounts that overstate the cost of rail WITH trail understating both the economic benefits of a rail corridor and the cost of building trail only. In its statement "interim use" it neglects the cost of coming back later to take out the trail and replacing the rail WITH trail. It also neglects to inform the community of their costs for the trail. In one community that was faced with trail only, the community members were surprised and dismayed to learn that the town was expected to maintain the trail, provide emergency services and pay the costs for access.

Maine DOT is rightfully concerned about the costs of maintaining existing roads. By removing rail corridors that could take trucks off the highway and encourage rural businesses, trail ONLY does not seem like a good bargain. The wise option is a statewide plan for transit allowing rails WITH trails which would be both energy and land efficient and serve all Mainers.

Sincerely,

Peter Cole, President  
Maine Rail Group  
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# EXPAND MAINE PASSENGER RAIL

## AND SAVE STATE-OWNED RAILROADS

New legislation will study extending Amtrak service north from Portland through Lewiston, Waterville, and Bangor to Orono.

However: Maine DOT wants to remove critical sections of three state-owned railroads, crippling Maine's ability to offer 21st century transportation incorporating rail and other public transit.

Please **support** expanded rail and **oppose** removal of state-owned lines. Rail *with* trail is the answer.

- This will:**
- Stimulate Housing & Development
  - Deliver Accessible Transit
  - Combat Climate Change

