

Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and honorable members of the Transportation Committee,

My name is Bella Sturtevant. I'm an 18 year old student at Thomas College in Waterville and I'm here today to ask you to support Representative Hasenfus's bill, LD 487.

This bill directs the state to apply for the Corridor Identification Program, a federal grant that would fully fund a passenger rail corridor connecting Portland to Orono. This project offers significant benefits for Maine, both environmentally and for residents like me.

Firstly, passenger trains are a far more sustainable transportation option than the countless vehicles traveling on the busy Maine Turnpike daily. While environmental concerns are important, I also want to highlight the personal advantages this rail line would provide. For example, my dad lives in Auburn which is a potential stop along the route. My mom lives in Leeds which is a much more rural town, but she works in Lewiston and could easily pick me up at the proposed Auburn stop on her way home. Currently, traveling between my college and my parents' homes is time-consuming and expensive. This train would allow me to commute more easily, saving me money and letting me spend more time with my family. My family and I always talk about taking a day trip to the Boston aquarium, but we never actually do it because it takes so much planning. If we could just hop on a train and ride down, we could go more often. Finally, a Waterville stop would be a tremendous asset to my college town, providing out-of-state parents a convenient travel option.

As a young Mainer and an advocate for rail travel, I strongly urge you to support LD 487.

Thank you for your time,

Bella Sturtevant