

Testimony of Sam Purinton

In Support of LD 1020, An Act Repealing the Laws for the Gorham Connector

April 3, 2025

Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation

My name is Sam Purinton, I live in Gorham.

A few months ago, I wanted to step out of my silo. I had been vehemently opposed to the turnpike expansion from the beginning, but I thought “maybe I am out of touch”. I wanted to cut through all the noise to see for myself what my neighbors really thought of the proposed highway coming to town. So, on a warm Saturday morning this past January, a friend and I canvassed my local street, which is about a mile from where the proposed turnpike would end. We found 20 people and asked them “How do you feel about the proposed highway expansion”. *Every single one* said they did not want it. The reasons they had were varied, from not wanting to destroy the environment to thinking it was overkill, but one of them wanted the highway to be built.

As my friends in advocacy have said or will say, this bill provides closure for the local area. I have been worried about how a highway so close to my neighborhood will change it. I'm worried about the street I live on going from a street where kids walk and bike to school to a through road for commuters to Portland. As my girlfriend and I think about putting down roots and starting a family, we cannot in good conscience choose to raise children in a place that's slated to become a highway on-ramp. Striking the Gorham Connector from the MTA charter will give me and my neighbors the confidence to make long term investments in our neighborhood.

Removing the Gorham Connector from the MTA charter is the will of Gorham residents, and allows us the confidence to make a long term investment in our place without this proposed highway hanging over our heads.

Please support this bill.

Thank you

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