

David Kinsman
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Members of the Transportation Committee,

I am writing in support of LD 1370, a bill that would authorize the use of 4 state-owned railroad lines as trail until rail corridors for interim use as multi-use trails. It allows for modifying the railroad tracks and ties for public use and for restoring train service on those lines.

This would be an excellent use for rail lines that are currently not being used by anyone. The Rails to Trails Conservancy has basically done this very successfully over the years. They have rail banked – kept rail corridors from being broken up or sold off while using them for the public good as multi-use recreation trails. They have kept those rail corridors intact while creating thousands of miles of trails. Now Maine has the chance to do the same until the time comes to return the trails back to rails.

I have ridden many trails around our country and Canada and have seen what a positive impact they make on a community. Longer trails bring in bike tourists who pay to stay in local towns and eat, drink and shop. They have a big impact, economically on a town and surrounding area.

On the Mountain Division Trail, I have heard people say that the trail changed their life. They feel they have a safe place to ride their bike, run, walk or inline skate. Some of them bought bikes because of the trail. I think anyone who owns a pair of roller skis, uses the MDT in Fryeburg.

These trails connect communities and are like linear parks where people can meet and socialize. Trails are great for commuting and kids getting to school.

So rather than let these rail stay dormant, let's put them to use as recreation trails that will benefit everyone.

David Kinsman
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