

Chani Cochrane
Saco
LD 1170

Senator Chipman, Representative Williams and the honorable members of the transportation committee,

My name is Chani, I am a mother of five and a business owner residing in Saco and I am here to testify in support of LD1170, Resolve, To Promote Passenger Rail for Commuters.

As a state, we are extremely dependent on cars. For example, my family requires three cars to juggle the multiple schedules that comes along with children and with two working adults. I could not imagine being in a situation where my family did not have access to a car for our work commutes, school, extracurriculars and so on. However, there are folks that don't have access to a car or spend a great deal of their income just to have access to basic amenities. Transportation is not a privilege. It is needed for every family and hard working Mainer in order to work, eat, visit the doctor's, etc. It is unfair to simply only have one form of transportation available, especially since there are challenges posed to having only cars as a viable option. This bill addresses these issues because passenger rail is a reliable, accessible and convenient option.

I would also like to add, from a business owner's perspective, enhancement of passenger rail will significantly boost our historic downtowns. My office is located on 110 Main St, so I see the vibrancy of downtown and how connected of a community it is. However, what takes away from this sense of community, is the constant traffic congestion and the lack of safety for walkers and bikers. Saco has the busiest exit on the highway and it certainly burdens our Main St. Our downtown is meant to be a safe and welcoming place. I strongly believe strengthening our public transit reduces traffic congestion and encourages a safer downtown community. I believe that this bill will also achieve that.

Overall, as a mother who understands the need for reliable transportation, and as a business owner who sees the need for safer downtowns, I urge the committee to vote "ought to pass" on LD 1170. I thank you for your time and service.