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Hello there,

My name is Martin Skacel, and I'm a high-school student from Bangor, Maine. I am speaking to express my strong support for passenger rail and its potential to improve transportation options for working people--including the youth population of Maine. Transportation across Maine almost entirely comprises of automobiles or bussing alone. Besides these, there is no other reliable way to connect our growing rural communities and their populations within the state or beyond. Particularly, easier transportation through rail will strongly encourage young people to stay, work, and live in Maine. Right now, Maine is exactly what we call it: Vacationland. It brings people from across the country to visit for a few days or retire. However, we all know that Maine can be so much more than that. With the oldest population in the country, Maine desperately needs more young people to stay and support an economically prosperous future. This is the greatest economic concern Maine currently faces. If Maine wants to attract more young people, it must provide them with what makes them stay. And it starts with better transportation options. My optimistic and environmentally conscious generation needs tools such as easier transportation to stay and work in Maine. Each week, my dad travels from Bangor to Portland. He drives. My sister currently lives and works in Portland. She drives to Bangor and back. She's 23. Just like me, she's part of Maine's young population. A rail system to connect the communities of Maine would provide ease of transport and draw young people to the state--confirming Maine as a pioneer in the future of transportation, which is public. If Maine wants to be more than just "Vacationland," it needs to cater to a transportation system that supports more than just vacationing. This starts with the youth population, and it starts with rail transportation. Thank you.