

Pamela J. Fischer

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Senator Chipman, Representative Williams, and Members of the Transportation Committee:

My name is Pamela Fischer and I have been a resident of New Gloucester for over 30 years. I am writing to testify in strong support of Rep. Bell's proposed amendment to LD 209, "Resolve, to Direct the Department of Transportation to Implement the Recommendation of the Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council."

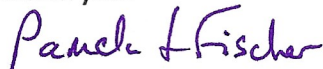
Having this rail trail through my community would be an important resource for me, my family, and all residents. As a life-long cyclist and pedestrian, I would use this trail frequently to run errands, commute to Portland, and to enjoy the outdoors.

It has become increasingly dangerous to walk and bike on the roadways in my town. Speeding vehicles and distracted drivers are everyday encounters. Most of the roadways in New Gloucester are narrow, rough, and do not have adequate shoulders for safe biking and walking. This rail trail would enable me, and countless others in my community - and beyond, to enjoy a bike ride or long walk without fear of being struck by a car. This is especially important for the children and young families in our town, who have very few places where they can ride their bikes safely. The rail trail would also be a valued resource for our senior residents, many of whom want to remain active by getting out to walk.

There is also another good reason to support this rail trail: It would be a significant attraction for visitors to our state. People who enjoy outdoor tourism in all four seasons would come to recreate on this trail. Without a doubt, area businesses would benefit and new businesses would be created. As the *Vacationland* state, why wouldn't we want to take action to enhance the opportunities for safe, active, outdoor tourism?

Please support the recommendation of the Portland to Auburn RUAC. Not only will this give me and other local residents a safe place to ride and walk, it will provide long lasting economic benefits to the State of Maine.

Thank you.



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