

Doug Smith  
Windham  
LD 404

William Douglas Smith  
Windham Resident for 20 years  
LD 404 and LD1405

I write today to ask you to vote OUGHT TO PASS for both LD 404 and LD1405.

I have been a resident of South Windham for 20 years and live ½ a mile from the Mountain Division Trail. As the trail was built and paved, I have come to use the trail more and more for walking, biking, and X-country skiing in the winter. From Spring until late Fall my wife and I are on the trail 3+ times a week. We are not alone. There are many other walkers, runners, cyclists, skateboarders, snowmobilers, and families with children, baby carriages, and dogs. It is a wonderful asset for Windham, Gorham, and the region and has become a place to exercise and see familiar faces.

This bill effectively extends this trail (connecting existing sections paved in Fryeburg and Windham/Gorham/Standish) from South Windham to Fryeburg and into NH. I am totally in favor of having a paved, trail until rail for this 31-mile section. The idea that residents of Standish, Steep Falls, Baldwin, Hiram, Brownfield, and Fryeburg will experience what we have enjoyed and benefited for over 15 years by having a trail instead of dormant, unused and unusable (in its present state) rails is tremendous.

Frankly speaking, building a trail until rail makes sense for many reasons starting with:

- The tracks no longer serve a purpose and, after being studied several times over the last 15 years by consultants retained by the MaineDOT, show no prospects for being revitalized and economically viable in the near and middle term.
- This is the most expedient way to build the trail.
- This is by far the least expensive way to build the trail. According to the Mountain Division RUAC Summary and Recommendations report (May, 2022) the cost of constructing a paved Trail until Rail is estimated at \$ 20.1 million and a rail with a trail was at \$ 145.8 million over 7x the cost.

Please vote Ought to Pass for LD404 and LD1450 so Mainers can utilize this precious resource.

Sincerely,  
Doug Smith