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LD 1750

As a resident of Auburn, an employee in Portland, a transportation engineer, and the Chair of the Lewiston-Auburn Complete Streets Committee, I am providing written support for LD 1750.

A previous Rail Use Advisory Council (RUAC), which I was a member of, ultimately did not result in a clear majority vote for an outcome and was unfortunately compromised from the beginning in terms of the nature of its composition and the nature of the evaluation process itself. As such, a more serious and considered look should be taken in light of our increasing need to shift toward a lower-carbon and climate-resilient future.

Furthermore, the emerging land use opportunities along this corridor, from the explosion of development on Portland's Eastern Waterfront to the establishment of the new Northeastern Roux Institute campus to the revolution in community-building zoning changes in Auburn create a profound opportunity to create a meaningful shift in travel patterns.

This plan has the opportunity to look at a true variety of rail options for this corridor, not simply an Amtrak-style heavy-rail intercity option. Further, what was clear from the previous RUAC process was a strong interest in active transportation options along this corridor as well, which would greatly supplement and support a transition to transit use. Further, the economic opportunities around such a corridor in each of the communities along the Saint Lawrence and Atlantic Line with some level of value-capture could easily leverage local matches toward funding such an endeavor.

I urge support of LD 1750 and a move to provide the opportunities that this corridor, and Maine residents truly deserve - and need for the future.

Thank you,

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