

LD 1750 Written Comment - ONTP
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Senator Chipman, Representative Crafts, and members of the Transportation Committee:

My name is Paul Drinan and I am a resident of Westbrook. I strongly support the interim use of the Berlin Subdivision corridor as a bike and pedestrian trail, as recommended by the Rail Use Advisory Council. As you may know, this corridor is the anchor of the Casco Bay Trail through Portland, Falmouth, Cumberland, Yarmouth, North Yarmouth, Pownal, and New Gloucester.

This corridor is not appropriate for passenger rail for the following reasons:

- The MDOT RUAC (Rail Use Advisory Council) has already voted to create an interim trail
- Every major decision-maker for rail infrastructure agrees that passenger rail in this corridor is NOT viable: USDOT, MDOT, GPCOG, NEPRA
- There's an alternate rail corridor that's currently in use and better positioned for passenger rail
- The tracks would need to be replaced at great cost to the taxpayer in order for rail to be viable.
- The highest and best use for the people of Maine is an active transportation corridor
- The taxpayer has already funded numerous studies of this corridor - enough already!

Also, key goals of [Maine Department of Transportation's Maine State Active Transportation Plan](#) align with the majority votes of the RUAC for an interim trail. These include:

- Safe Travel
- A Vibrant Economy
- Connectivity
- Environmentally Sustainable Transportation System
- Equitable Access
- Healthier Maine (which translates to a healthier economy)

If, indeed, the State of Maine wants to support economic impact opportunities, equitable transportation, environmental justice, and public health, an interim trail checks all the boxes. Climate change has elevated Maine's active transportation imperative from desirable to essential and urgent. Active transportation infrastructure enables accessible, affordable, emission-free transportation, outdoor recreation, and improved public health - also known as "transportation equity".

For these reasons, I recommend and request an ONTP vote on LD 1750 and that the committee direct MaineDOT to implement the majority recommendation of the Berlin Subdivision RUAC.

Thank you for your time and service,

Paul Drinan