



TOWN OF NORTH YARMOUTH

The Town Where Others Began.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEES

IN SUPPORT OF LD 511

*Resolve to Direct the Department of Transportation to Implement the Recommendations
Of the Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council*

March 4, 2025

Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and members of the Transportation Committee, my name is Diane Barnes, and I am the Town Manager of North Yarmouth and member of the Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council. I am speaking in support of LD 511, Resolve to Direct the Department of Transportation to Implement the Recommendations of the Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council.

The State Railroad Preservation and Assistance Act requires the Department of Transportation to seek legislative approval for any conversion of a state-owned rail corridor in which the department controls the right-of-way to a non-rail recreational for non-recreational transportation use.

The Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council was formed in April 2022 pursuant to Maine Revised Statutes, Title 23, section 75, to review the section of the St. Lawrence and Atlantic rail corridor from mile post 0.0 in Portland to mile post 26.5 om Auburn, referred to as the Berlin Subdivision Rail Corridor, for the potential non-rail use.

A majority of 7 out of the 13 members of the Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council voted in favor of recommending the conversion of 26.5 miles of the inactive Berlin Subdivision Rail Corridor into an interim bicycle and pedestrian trail.

The Town of North Yarmouth supports the creation of an interim bicycle and pedestrian trail on the 5.1 miles of the state-owned, inactive Berlin Subdivision Rail Corridor that runs through the town.

On September 19, 2023, the Town of North Yarmouth Select Board signed a resolution requesting the Commissioner of Transportation and the Maine State Legislature to approve the conversion of 26.5 miles of the Berlin Subdivision Rail Corridor into an interim bicycle and pedestrian trail. This request aligns with the recommendation of the rail use advisory council.