

Donald Martin
Kennebunk
LD 676

Hello, my name is Donald Martin, I live in Kennebunk, and I am writing to oppose LD 676.

I oppose the removal of any and all railroad infrastructure from the state, as it is cheaper to refurbish tracks and railbeds than it is to completely remove tracks and rebuild them at a later date. More specifically, I oppose removal of the Mountain Division line because of its potential economic value, as well as its historic significance. If the Mountain Division line is removed, the state would be effectively cutting off western Maine from a vital transportation asset, significantly hindering any and all economic growth in the region.

Personally, I would love to see Portland be connected to North Conway via a scenic/tourist railroad. Portland is growing in popularity as a cruise line destination, and if providing a connection to an additional popular outlet shopping and outdoor activity region could only draw more potential customers.

As it so happens, the Conway Scenic Railroad has presented its interest in using the Mountain Division for operations. Per the Rail Preservation Act, they must be heard out before any non-rail use can commence. The Conway Scenic Railroad already operates on the New Hampshire portion of the Mountain Division, keeping the heritage of the Maine Central Railroad very much alive today. As a Mainer with a great love of our railroad history, this would be an incredible opportunity to bring some of our historic past back to the present.

I would like to thank the committee for taking the time to read my testimony, and I urge you to vote "Ought Not to Pass" on LD676. Thank you.