

Doug Smith
Windham
LD 676

March 31, 2025

Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation

My name is Doug Smith, I am a Windham resident and live within 1/2 mile of the Mountain Division Trail. My family use the trail several times a week. I have been actively involved with the Mountain Division Trail for over 25 years. As a member of the Mountain Trail Alliance (now the Friends of the Mountain Division Trail) I have followed with keen interest these developments.

- September of 2021, Maine DOT Commissioner Van Note established a Mountain Division Rail Use Advisory Council (RUAC), as required by LD21, with representatives from all towns the rail-trail would pass, state agencies, regional planning organizations, and the Portland Water District.
- After 9 monthly meetings, the RUAC voted 11:1 to recommend the interim conversion of 31 miles of existing railroad track to an interim 10' wide, paved bicycle and pedestrian trail-until-rail.
- Letters of support for LD404 were submitted to Maine's Transportation Committee by all towns and various businesses along the 31 miles of the rail line in western Maine, over 200 testimony submissions and dozens of in person testimony provided in support of LD404 in person, and hours of Committee time.
- The bill was passed by the Transportation Committee, Senate, and House with super majorities before being signed into law by Governor Mills on July 6th, 2023.

Now LD 676, an act to fund the recommendations of the Mountain Division RUAC, is before the Transportation Committee. The Bill includes a one-time, \$500 placeholder for any funds received from outside sources designated for MDOT to spend on replacement of the tracks on the 31 miles of the rail corridor between the towns of Fryeburg and Standish per the recommendation of the Mountain Division Rail RUAC.

I thank committee members for their consideration and urge them to vote:
"Ought to Pass"

Doug Smith
Windham Resident