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Help is Needed to Expand Passenger Rail Travel in Maine

TRNE and MRG need to raise \$25,000 for a definitive economic analysis.

Maine has an opportunity to do what few states have been able to do before: expand its rail passenger network from just two counties to the entire state. And we need your help!

On March 6, 2025, LD 487 was introduced in the Maine Legislature as a Resolve “*for the Purpose of Identifying the Rail Corridor Connecting Portland to Orono as an Intercity Passenger Rail Corridor*”. Despite positive testimony from young people to seniors at the bill’s public hearing, supporters realize that they need more data to model the costs and benefits of passenger rail service between Portland and Bangor/Orono to bolster the chances this legislation will be enacted.

Our two organizations discovered that the Rail Passengers Association, a national passenger rail advocacy group, has developed an economic modeling system successfully used for such applications elsewhere in the country. The cost for this sophisticated analysis is significantly lower than traditional modeling systems. To take advantage of this service, **TrainRiders Northeast and the Maine Rail Group are working together to raise the \$25,000 needed for this study, but we need your financial help in any amount to cover this cost.**

The study will assist both the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority and MaineDOT. It will use plain language and can be relied upon by regulators, lawmakers, reporters, and other interested parties nationwide. The study will include population, tourism, and other data, with anticipated economic, environmental, and safety benefits of the service. No prior study has had these goals or its comprehensive scope, examining regional effects throughout Maine.

Once completed, this study will allow Maine to apply for Federal corridor extension funding to Bangor/Orono. Step 1 consists of a \$500,000 grant to focus on the scope, schedule, and budget for the service. Step 2 is a federal 90% and state 10% match for the creation of a service development plan that would include specific steps needed to prepare for project construction.

Maine Rail Group and TrainRiders are both 503(c)(3) organizations. Your contribution of any amount is needed to reach **our goal of raising the \$25,000 needed for this study**, and that contribution may be tax deductible (consult your tax advisor). You can make contributions by check or electronically to either MRG, Inc. or TrainRiders Northeast, with “*Portland-Bangor study*” noted on the subject line.

Respectfully,
Peter Cole
President, MRG, Inc.

Bruce Sleeper
President, Train Riders Northeast

EXPAND MAINE PASSENGER RAIL

AND SAVE STATE-OWNED RAILROADS

New legislation will study extending Amtrak service north from Portland through Lewiston, Waterville, and Bangor to Orono.

However: Maine DOT wants to remove critical sections of three state-owned railroads, crippling Maine's ability to offer 21st century transportation incorporating rail and other public transit.

Please **support** expanded rail and **oppose** removal of state-owned lines. Rail *with* trail is the answer.

This will:

- Stimulate Housing & Development
- Deliver Accessible Transit
- Combat Climate Change

Area of detail



YES, I WANT TO SUPPORT EXPANDED DOWNEASTER SERVICE TO CENTRAL MAINE FROM PORTLAND TO LEWISTON, WATERVILLE AND BANGOR/ORONO!!

_____ I am enclosing a check for \$ _____ made out to either “TrainRiders Northeast” or “MRG, Inc.” with “Portland to Bangor Study” in the subject line.

_____ To contribute electronically go to either <https://www.MaineRailGroup.org> or <https://www.trainridersne.org/> and make a contribution on the “contribution” portion of their “membership contribution” page noting there that it is for the “Portland to Bangor Study”.

MRG, Inc. (Internal Revenue Code; EIN# 01-0467975)

and

TrainRiders Northeast (Internal Revenue Code: EIN# 01-0451389)

are both non-profit exempt organizations as described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code

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