

## **Index – Letters of Support for the Project**

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## **Index – Letters Opposing Site 2**

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# TOWN OF WELLS

*Wells, Maine*

## RESOLUTION

**WHEREAS** the Amtrak Downeaster passenger train service operating between Brunswick, Maine and Boston, Massachusetts is an important public transportation link for the region as well as residents, visitors, and businesses within the Town of Wells;

**WHEREAS** there is an important opportunity to reduce the travel time between Boston and Brunswick by relocating the Downeaster station in Portland from its current location along the Mountain Division branch line to a new location along the main line to eliminate the need for time-consuming reverse movements by the train to access the station. Eliminating this movement will save fifteen minutes of travel time in each direction for each train;

**WHEREAS** the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority (NNEPRA) is completing a double track extension and station project in Wells that, in conjunction with a relocated Portland Station, will enable the operation of a new morning train for commuters traveling into the greater Portland Region for work;

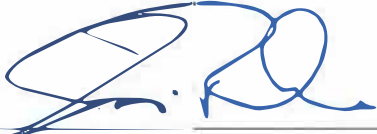
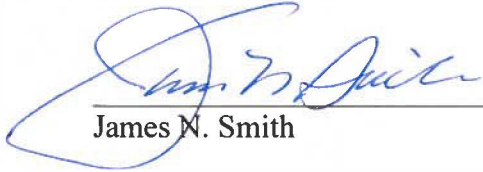
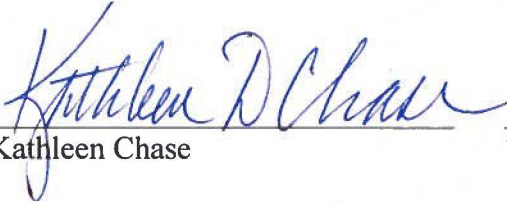
**WHEREAS** NNEPRA, the operator of the Downeaster conducted a thorough Site Alternatives Analysis of potential locations for the Portland Station along the main line, including a robust public process and input from the Maine Department of Transportation and other stakeholders, culminating in a decision by NNEPRA that the most advantageous site for the station is the junction between the main line and the Mountain Division branch line adjacent to St. John's St. in Portland (a/k/a "Site 3"). In reaching this conclusion, NNEPRA determined that "Site 1" was not functional, and that "Site 2" presented significant operational challenges and was located on land that was not available for acquisition;

**WHEREAS** Site 3 is also preferred by the railroad owner and operator CSX, Amtrak, MaineDOT, the Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce, and the strong majority of public commenters; is within walking distance to more than 9,000 jobs; will enable a pedestrian link between St. Johns Street and the Fore River Parkway; and will support potential expansion of passenger rail service in the region and to the north;

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:** The Town of Wells supports the decision by NNEPRA to relocate the Downeaster's Portland station along the main line at Site 3.

Given under our hands this 5<sup>th</sup> day of August 2025.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN OF THE TOWN OF WELLS:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Timothy Roche  
\_\_\_\_\_  
James N. Smith  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kathleen Chase  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John K. MacLeod III  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Avery Seuter



Nicole Bucich  
Vice President, Network Development & State Supported Service

August 5, 2025

Patricia Quinn  
Executive Director  
Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority  
75 West Commercial St., Suite 104  
Portland, ME 04104

Dear Patricia Quinn:

Both Amtrak and the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority (NNEPRA) share the goal of relocating Portland Station from its current location on the Mountain Branch stub line to a new location on the CSX mainline. This relocation will bring significant customer benefits, as well as improving the operational, ridership, and financial performance of the Amtrak *Downeaster* service. NNEPRA has been working in partnership with Amtrak, the Maine Department of Transportation, and CSX for several years to relocate Portland station, and we are therefore all excited to see this project move forward and to realize the associated benefits.

The current station location and the train movements required for the *Downeaster* to stop at that location add additional travel time to the five daily roundtrips between Boston, MA and Brunswick, ME, totaling 130 minutes per day. These movements also create risks of potential delays when passenger service is impacted by freight rail traffic, require additional crew time and fuel costs, and decrease the competitiveness of the *Downeaster* with other travel options serving the Northern New England market. This extra travel time and potential delays impact Portland Station's 190,000 annual rail customers, as well as the *Downeaster*'s 550,000-plus annual customers.

Moving this station to the mainline not only saves time and money for the *Downeaster* service but will also optimize passenger and freight rail operations and increase the *Downeaster*'s competitiveness. Locating the station closer to Downtown Portland will also improve connectivity to Portland's thriving business district and provide better opportunities for station area development. As ridership on the *Downeaster* continues to grow and is on track to surpass the FY24 record, the importance of relocating the Portland station only grows.

Amtrak reiterates our support—as stated in previous discussions and correspondence—for the recommended option (Site 3) identified in NNEPRA's 2024 *Portland Train Station Relocation Planning Report*. As outlined in the report and as discussed previously with NNEPRA, Site 3 has several advantages compared to the other options considered:

- **Strategic Location** – Site 3's location, south of the existing Mountain Branch switch, provides several key advantages with respect to optimizing train movements, reducing delays, and future-proofing potential passenger rail extensions, including:



- Maintaining fluid movement to access the Mountain Branch line from points south and easily move trains into the Portland Layover Facility (PLF) without requiring additional switching movements.
- Reducing travel delays, saving passengers at least 13 minutes of travel time as trains will not need to back in and out of the station or stop at the platform longer than necessary to change cab direction (as illustrated in the attachment below). This will also mitigate any potential delays incurred by concurrent mainline freight and passenger rail traffic.
- Keeping the station clear of nearby at-grade crossings will mitigate risk of rail or vehicular delays incurred at the crossing.
- Allowing for future passenger rail expansion towards Westbrook that includes the new station as part of both the existing and future rail routes.

Comparatively, Site 2's location, north of the Mountain Branch switch, is less strategic for train movements wishing to access the Mountain Branch or PLF from the station directly.

Furthermore, this location does not mitigate delay risk incurred by concurrent mainline freight traffic (since only one track at this location may be used to access the Mountain Branch by reversing south towards the switch) or potential delays from the nearby at-grade crossing, and does not allow for the new station to be included on future rail extensions that include the Mountain Branch line.

- **Increasing Passenger Safety** – Site 3 provides a safer location for passengers to board and alight trains, away from nearby at-grade crossings. Access to the station is provided from adjacent pedestrian and bicycle pathways, and features a nearby grade separated roadway crossing to keep drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists away from the tracks. In comparison, Site 2, which is located much closer to the Congress Street at-grade crossing, creates an additional risk for passengers accessing the station from the crossing, as well as vehicles crossing the tracks close to the station.
- **Improving Multimodal Connectivity** – Site 3 offers maximal multimodal connectivity to existing pathways that abut the station site and its adjacent lots. The location benefits from easy access to the Fore River Parkway and St. John Street for both vehicles and bicycles and sits next to the existing pedestrian pathway that encircles the Northern Light Mercy Hospital. A new station at this site would have the opportunity to join the pedestrian and bicycle networks on both sides of the tracks, allowing pedestrians on the east side of the station easier access to the Fore River and Mercy Hospital via a new bridge. Comparatively, Site 2's multimodal access is limited, as the site's west side abuts the County Jail and does not offer an opportunity to expand pedestrian or bicycle access beyond the current network.
- **Optimizing Station Area Development** – Site 3 has the benefit of being adjacent to high density commercial and residential development areas on both sides of the track, existing bus routes and employer shuttles, and nearby anchoring institutions that are open to future development conversations and possibilities. Combined with the existing pedestrian and bicycle networks, as well as possible expansion of future service along the Mountain Branch, Site 3 would maximize the potential train services that could enable increased commercial and residential development nearby, spanning both sides of the track with limited physical impediments. Site 2, which could only spur development potential on the east side of the tracks, has more limited land available for station area development, additionally hampered by neighboring institutions that have indicated that they are not interested in working with area stakeholders to realize a station-oriented development vision.



Given these advantages that benefit all stakeholders, Site 3 provides a preferred solution that improves existing train operations and minimizes travel delays while benefitting from adjacent access pathways and multimodal links to best position the site for new station area development. This creates the opportunity to generate additional *Downeaster* ridership, thereby increasing market share in Northern New England and increasing the ability to spur station area development that will increase real estate investment in Portland.

Like any project of this complexity, there may be additional challenges that will need to be addressed in the design phase to ensure project feasibility. However, Amtrak remains confident that Site 3 will create the most successful station location, in terms of safety, operations, ridership, revenue, station area development, multimodal connectivity, and public perception of the *Downeaster* service.

Amtrak is excited to continue working with you and your colleagues at NNEPRA, as well as CSX, MaineDOT, and the City of Portland, to create a new Portland station location that meets the needs of all stakeholders and supports the ongoing success of the *Downeaster* service.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nicole Bucich".

Nicole Bucich

*Vice President, Network Development and State Supported Service*

cc:

Jeff Mann, Senior Director, State Supported Services

Chris Natale, Director, State Supported Services

Joseph Barr, Director, Network Development - East

Margaret Clark, Manager, Government Affairs - Northeast

Kevin Chittenden, Superintendent Operations II

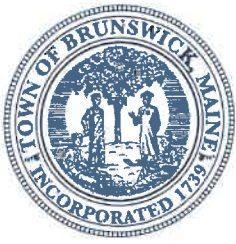
Luke Irvine, Assistant Superintendent Operations



## ATTACHMENT A: MOVEMENTS AND TIME REQUIRED FOR EXISTING DOWNEASTER PORTLAND SERVICE







# Town of Brunswick, Maine

INCORPORATED 1739

TOWN COUNCIL

85 UNION STREET

BRUNSWICK, MAINE 04011-2418

TELEPHONE 207-725-6659

FAX 207-725-6663

September 3, 2025

Patricia Quinn, Executive Director  
Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority  
75 West Commercial Street, Suite 104  
Portland, ME 04101

Dear Patricia,

On behalf of the Brunswick Town Council, I am writing to express support for the relocation of the Portland train station from its current location on Thompson Point to the main rail line in Portland. The Council also appreciates the thorough study of various potential locations for the new station that the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority (NNEPRA) has completed and analyzed.

Moving the train station will benefit Brunswick riders by decreasing the trip time by 15 minutes and will allow visitors from Southern Maine to arrive in Brunswick in mid-morning and spend the entire day enjoying our Town.

Amtrak's Downeaster Train first came to Brunswick in November 2015, and with the construction of a 650' X 70' layover facility in 2016, and construction of a secondary passing rail line in Falmouth and Cumberland in 2018, Brunswick now enjoys five round trip trains to Boston per day. At the end of the Downeaster line, the Brunswick Station is used by residents in surrounding communities to the north and west.

With the ongoing improvement projects and continued investment in the Downeaster rail line by NNEPRA, we expect that train ridership from the Brunswick Station will grow. For all train riders from Brunswick, it will be very advantageous if the trip to and from Boston is 15 minutes shorter.

Please accept this letter as the Brunswick Town Council's endorsement of NNEPRA's plan to relocate the Portland train station to a location along the main rail line.

Sincerely,

Sande Updegraph  
Chair, Brunswick Town Council





September 19, 2025

Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority  
75 W. Commercial Street, Suite 104  
Portland, ME 04101

To whom it may concern,

On behalf of the Maine Tourism Association, I am writing to express our support for the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority's (NNEPRA) proposal to relocate the Downeaster's Portland station to Site 3. This relocation is an important step forward in strengthening Portland's role as a transportation hub and improving travel options for both residents and visitors.

Relocating the station to Site 3 will provide significant cost savings for construction and operations, ensuring long-term fiscal responsibility while creating a more efficient facility. At the same time, this move will greatly enhance passenger satisfaction by offering improved access, better connections, and a modernized travel experience.

For residents, the new station will provide more reliable and convenient transportation options, helping to reduce congestion and improve mobility throughout the region. For visitors, the relocation will create a more welcoming and seamless first impression of Portland and Maine as a whole, supporting our tourism economy and enhancing Maine's reputation as a destination that values quality and accessibility.

Maine's economy depends on a strong and integrated transportation network that connects communities, supports the workforce, and welcomes visitors. By supporting the relocation of the Downeaster's Portland station to Site 3, NNEPRA has the opportunity to invest in high-quality, sustainable infrastructure that will benefit Portland and our state for decades to come.

The Maine Tourism Association strongly supports NNEPRA's proposal.

Sincerely,

Tony Cameron  
Chief Executive Officer  
Maine Tourism Association



**PORTLAND**  
Regional Chamber of Commerce

**93 Exchange Street Portland, ME 04101 • (207) 772-2811**

**[chamber@portlandregion.com](mailto:chamber@portlandregion.com) • [PortlandRegion.com](http://PortlandRegion.com)**

**Cape Elizabeth • Cumberland • Falmouth • Gorham • Scarborough • South Portland • Portland • Westbrook**

September 23, 2025

Patricia Quinn  
Executive Director  
Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority  
75 West Commercial Street, Suite 104  
Portland, ME 04101

Dear Ms. Quinn,

On behalf of our over 1,300 members, collectively employing over 75,000 Mainers, the Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce writes to express support for the relocation of the Amtrak Downteaster's Portland station from Thompson's Point to the main line Site 3 location, as identified through NNEPRA's rigorous analysis of main line and no-build alternatives.

Over the past several years, our organization has been deeply engaged in the public engagement process led by NNEPRA and in subsequent discussions with stakeholders. That process has made it increasingly clear that Site 3 is the only viable choice for main line relocation, both in terms of operational efficiency and multimodal connectivity. Located near the Western Prom Trail, the recently extended West Commercial Street Pathway, the Fore River Trail, and existing METRO bus service, Site 3 offers unmatched integration with Portland's bike, pedestrian, and transit networks. In addition, NNEPRA, Amtrak, CSX, the Maine Department of Transportation, and impacted property owners have all raised critical concerns about the operational limitations of Site 2 that cannot be feasibly resolved.

While we respect the vision of those advocating for Site 2, we are concerned that locating the station there, without landowner support or clear redevelopment pathways for the entire Saint John Shopping Plaza, would hinder rather than enable transit-oriented development at that location. We share the City's vision for the eventual redevelopment of the Saint John Plaza, but that transformation is far more distant than the immediate need to achieve the operational benefits of main line relocation. When that redevelopment does occur, it should not be constrained by the space and access demands of an active rail station.

We greatly appreciate the thoughtful work of NNEPRA in advancing this project and urge all stakeholders to support moving forward with Site 3. As planning continues, we encourage further attention to key site plan elements, including lighting, wayfinding for bike/ped and transit connections, and broader strategies to spur redevelopment along the Saint John Valley corridor. This should include integration with existing institutional uses as well as future opportunities for transit-oriented development. Please do not hesitate to reach out if we can provide additional input or support for this important investment in our region's transportation infrastructure.

Sincerely,

Quincy Hentzel  
President & CEO  
Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce



September 25, 2025

RE: Support for Relocation of Portland's Downeaster Station to Site 3

To Whom It May Concern:

As the destination marketing and management organization for Greater Portland, Visit Portland strongly supports the efforts of the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority (NNEPRA) to improve passenger rail infrastructure and service along the Downeaster Corridor — particularly through the proposed relocation of the Portland station to a new site along the main rail line.

The Amtrak Downeaster is a critical public transportation link for our region, serving not only local residents and commuters but also the many leisure and business travelers who make a significant contribution to our tourism economy. With service between Brunswick, Maine and Boston, Massachusetts, the Downeaster connects Greater Portland to major markets and enhances our accessibility as a visitor destination.

However, the current location of the Portland station — nearly one mile off the main line — significantly reduces the efficiency and appeal of the service. It adds travel time, limits pedestrian access to Portland's downtown and commercial areas, and makes the train less competitive with other modes of transportation.

To address these issues, NNEPRA conducted a thorough evaluation of potential new station sites along the main line, with the goals of increasing ridership, reducing operational costs, and improving overall service efficiency. As a destination management organization, Visit Portland recognizes that accessible, modern, and well-located transportation infrastructure is essential to our mission. A station at Site 3, located directly on the main line, would meaningfully enhance the visitor experience, support regional events and conventions, reduce car dependency, and open new opportunities for travelers to explore Greater Portland without needing a personal vehicle.

We fully support NNEPRA's site selection and their plans to pursue federal funding — in partnership with MaineDOT — to design and construct a new passenger rail station at Site 3.

We respectfully urge decision-makers to support this essential investment in sustainable transportation and regional connectivity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lynn M. Tillotson'.

Lynn Tillotson  
President + CEO



# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

2 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002  
(207) 287-1400  
TTY: MAINE RELAY 711

**Lydia V. Crafts**

P.O. Box 122  
Newcastle, ME 04553  
Phone: (207) 593-2664  
[Lydia.Crafts@legislature.maine.gov](mailto:Lydia.Crafts@legislature.maine.gov)

Wednesday, October 1, 2025

Dear Director Quinn,

The Amtrak Downeaster passenger train service is a vital public transportation link for the region and state. The current Wells commuter upgrades will increase commuter access to Portland, but the impact of the additional train cannot be fully realized due to the distance and time constraints of the current station location.

The Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority (NNEPRA) is exploring opportunities to reduce travel times and increase ridership by relocating the Downeaster station in Portland from its current location along the Mountain Division branch line to the main line. The new location will save fifteen minutes of travel time in each direction for ten trains daily, reducing operating costs and saving the travelling public time and money.

NNEPRA conducted a thorough Site Alternatives Analysis of potential locations for the Portland Station along the main line. The Analysis included a robust public process and input from the Maine Department of Transportation and other stakeholders, culminating in NNEPRA's decision to site the station at the junction between the main line and the Mountain Division branch line adjacent to St. John's St. in Portland (Site 3). NNEPRA determined that Site 1 is not functional, and Site 2 presented significant operational challenges and is located on land that is not available for acquisition.

CSX, Amtrak, MaineDOT, the Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce, and the majority of public commenters all support the location of Site 3. It is within walking distance to more than 9,000 jobs, will create a pedestrian link between St. John Street and the Fore River Parkway, and will support the potential expansion of passenger rail service in the region and to the north.

As the Chairs of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation in the Maine State Legislature, we have heard from hundreds of rail advocates that improving rail transit in Maine is their number one transportation priority. Rail bills garner the largest turnout of any policy issue that comes before our committee. With this firsthand knowledge, we support the relocation to Site 3 as well as NNEPRA's due diligence identifying Site 3 as the only viable location for the station. We strongly support NNEPRA's efforts to pursue federal funding to design and develop a station at Site 3 in partnership with MaineDOT.

Sincerely,

Rep. Lydia Crafts & Senator Tim Nangle

**Cumberland County Government**  
27 Northport Drive, Portland, Maine 04103  
207-871-8380 • cumberlandcounty.org



**James H. Gailey, County Manager**

August 15, 2025

Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority  
75 West Commercial Street, Suite 104  
Portland, ME 04101  
Subject: Train Station Relocation - Site 2

Dear Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority,

This letter expresses significant concern to Site 2 for the proposed Portland train station relocation, as outlined in the VHB report dated December 5, 2024. While acknowledging the potential benefits of relocating the station, such as increased efficiency and improved passenger experience, the proximity of Site 2 to the Cumberland County Jail presents unacceptable security risks.

Site 2, located south of Congress Street near Union Station Plaza, is situated directly between the Cumberland County Jail and St. John Street. The close proximity of a public transportation hub to a correctional facility raises significant safety and security concerns for passengers, residents, and correctional staff alike.

Introducing a high-traffic train station adjacent to the jail could:

- **Compromise Jail Security:** The constant movement of people and vehicles associated with a train station could create opportunities for security breaches, illicit activities, and potential escape attempts.
- **Endanger Public Safety:** An incident at the jail or the train station could endanger a large number of people in a confined area. Evacuation of the jail is complex coordinated effort, one that the County tends to try to mitigate exposure.
- **Increase Traffic Congestion:** The area surrounding the jail already experiences significant traffic, and a new train station would exacerbate these issues, impacting response times and daily commutes. Additionally, train patrons may attempt to gain access to available parking on the County's jail campus.

- Create Unnecessary Strain on Law Enforcement and Correctional Facilities: Responding to incidents or concerns in such close proximity would place an additional burden on already strained resources.
- Impacts to County Property: through the installation of a third rail with subsequent relocation of the County Way right-of-way this would move closer to the jail property, impacting County jail & facilities operations and full perimeter security and emergency coverage.

While acknowledging the desirability of a new train station, the selection of a site that jeopardizes the safety and security of the community is of major concern to the County. We have no objections to Site 3, the site selected by NNEPRA, but would have serious concerns if Site 2 were selected.

Prioritizing public safety in the selection of the new station location is essential.

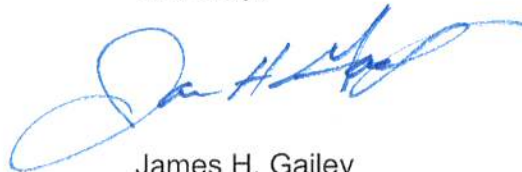
Thank you for your consideration of this critical matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'K. Joyce', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kevin Joyce  
Sheriff

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'James H. Gailey', with a large, looping initial 'J'.

James H. Gailey  
County Manager





September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025

To: Patricia Quinn, CEO - NNEPRA

Fr: Brian Batson, MaineHealth

Re: MaineHealth Opposition to Rail Station Site 2

cc: Britt Crewse; Katie Fullam Harris; Katie Krakowka; Matt Wolden; Jim Cohen

This memo is provided in response to NNEPRA's request for MaineHealth's position regarding the relocation of the commuter train station from Thompson's Point to the area between the MaineHealth Maine Medical Center employee garage and the Cumberland County jail off St. John Street in Portland, Maine ("Site 2"). MaineHealth has been a consistent participant in stakeholder engagement meetings, calls and other written communications regarding the potential relocation of the Thompson's Point station to various sites on the Portland peninsula over the course of the past several months.

Throughout this period of stakeholder engagement, MaineHealth has undertaken its own operational, financial and strategic assessments of the impact of relocating the station to Site 2. As part of our own analysis, MaineHealth has prioritized the impact to patient and employee safety and relied on the expertise of transportation and safety professionals, including the professionals from Amtrak, CSX, and MaineDOT. Based on the foregoing, we have concluded that **Site 2 is not a viable option** for the relocation of the rail station. Locating the station at Site 2 would have consequences for patient and employee safety MaineHealth cannot support, and would negatively impact MaineHealth financially and strategically.

### Key Concerns with Site 2

- **Public Safety Risks**
  - Amtrak, VHB Engineering, and CSX have all identified unavoidable safety risks at Site 2.
  - Traffic congestion and longer gate closures would increase the likelihood of accidents and create greater risk of injury to members of the public.
  - Emergency medical services would be directly impacted, with delayed ambulance transport times along Congress Street, a critical route to MaineHealth Maine Medical Center. The Libbytown "two way" Congress St conversion, which City staff has referenced in stakeholder discussions, has also lost federal funding and will not be coming to fruition.
  - Site 2 would increase risks to public safety and is therefore not a tenable or responsible option, regardless of any perceived attractive qualities of that site.
- **Conflict with Institutional Overlay Zone (IOZ)**



- Roughly half of Site 2 falls within MaineHealth's IOZ — the only area specifically designated by city zoning for future MHMMC expansion.
- Alternative use of this land would constrain MaineHealth Maine Medical Center's ability to meet growing healthcare demand in Portland.
- **Operational and Parking Impacts**
  - Site 2 currently provides essential staff and tenant parking, along with shuttle operations.
  - The garage holds over 2,300 spaces, serving 3,200 vehicles daily, with capacity to grow as needed to meet future workforce demand driven by regional healthcare needs.
  - Shuttles operate 24/7 with 680 trips per day, supporting staff access and hospital operations.
  - Loss or impairment of this infrastructure would severely disrupt hospital operations.

## **Conclusion**

MaineHealth unequivocally opposes Site 2 due to serious public safety risks, conflicts with the IOZ, and major operational impacts. While we take no position on whether the rail station should be relocated, we do not support Site 2 under any circumstances.