

SENATOR MORRISSEY: This, to me, is the most important use of this land, to maintain, to preserve a transportation corridor and make it potentially viable for the future again. The rails will be gone, the ties will be gone, but the corridor will be there. If you parcel it out one piece at a time, it will never be reestablished, and it may never have to be. But if, indeed, a rail is abandoned, we should maintain it in the state that we could conceivably come back in the future, because maybe not 10, maybe not 20, maybe 30 or 40 years down the line, that is something that we very vitally need in this state, a corridor in a certain area, a rail corridor. We should maintain the integrity of that corridor and this is one of the best ways to do it. If we can't save the railroads and we must abandon them, we should take steps to preserve the corridor, provide transportation, provide tourism opportunities for our folks. The money, at this time,...

SPEAKER BAACK: Time.

SENATOR MORRISSEY: ...is something I'm still questioning but I do support the concept and think we need to move it and get it started. Thank you.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Morrissey. We will now go to Senator Schimek.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Mr. President and members of the body, I am going to be brief, and if Senator Beutler would like to have some of my time when I am finished, I will relinquish it. I rise for several reasons. First of all, I would like to reiterate that this is an unique opportunity. Railroads are one of the very few land purchases that one can make that is in a long narrow strip that is conducive to bike trails. And so, economically, it is a very good purchase to be able to buy this kind of land. Probably, wouldn't be able to even dream of such a trail unless you had a railroad being abandoned and the rail line available. Secondly, I would just like to say to those who have gotten up and urged that we indefinitely postpone this bill because of a variety of reasons, some which may be valid, I would suggest that instead of killing this bill, that we work with the bill's sponsor to address some of the concerns, such as Senator Schmit and others had. I think that Senator Beutler has shown on a number of occasions the willingness to work with other people on their bills, and I would like to extend to him the same courtesy. Thirdly, Senator Lamb and others, Senator