

Stop the East-West Corridor

www.stopthecorridor.org

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Stop the East-West Corridor gets a boost from Revised Transportation Law

The bill that is expected to prevent future development of Cianbro's East-West Highway and Industrial Corridor idea passed into law unsigned by the Governor on June 26. The bill revises the controversial public-private partnership law for transportation projects to clarify that P3's must comply with Maine's Sensible Transportation Policy, which has guided Maine Transportation Policy and the Department of Transportation since 1991. The bill, LD 1168 was sponsored by Senator Paul Davis, R-Piscataquis, and broadly supported by opponents to the East-West Corridor, environmentalists, sportsmen and women, and small business owners. Opponents say that requiring Cianbro's East-West Corridor proposal to meet the criteria outlined in the Sensible Transportation Policy Act will be impossible for the developers.

"We've been following this for over 3 years," said Stop the East-West Corridor's statewide coordinator Chris Buchanan. "We have read Cianbro's proposal and attended most of Peter Vigue and Darryl Brown's presentations, and we've been honest with people about what they say. Most people don't like the idea."

"This law makes it necessary for Cianbro, or any other private development corporation, to have public support before moving forward with a significant transportation project that profits them." The bill created a reporting requirement so that both lawmakers and the public are informed annually by the Department about contracted public-private partnerships. "We believe that is important for transparency and accountability," said Buchanan.

"The need for state legislation has been clearly demonstrated by the actions taken by local communities to enact local laws designed to protect their community from the proposed East-West Corridor when adequate state policy has been sorely lacking. Eight communities have overwhelmingly passed some form of local ordinance, be it a moratorium, referendum, local-self governance, or land use ordinance. These communities so far include: Abbot, Charleston, Dexter, Dover-Foxcroft, Garland, Monson, Parkman, and Sangerville," Buchanan said.

"It is remarkable that so many local residents are taking the initiative to protect themselves. It is telling how many people feel threatened and left vulnerable by Maine's existing state laws. LD 1168 creates some protection for people who don't want the highway part of Cianbro's Corridor plan," Buchanan said.

Over the past three years, Stop the East-West Corridor has focused on developing resources, advocating for transparency, and supporting a statewide coalition of decentralized local resistance to the proposed East-West Corridor. The website, stopthecorridor.org, describes members as, "A coalition of Maine residents."

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