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December 4, 2018

Representative Roger Victory
Anderson House Office Bldg.
N-1192 House Office Building
Lansing, MI 48933

Re: HB 6124 and 6125

Dear Representative:

Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance is the statewide voice for the non-motorized trail community helping to build and manage trails for a healthier and more prosperous Michigan. We advocate for trails policy and funding and work with communities all over the state to help to promote land and water trails at the local, state and federal level.

We have been and remain a part of a large conservation coalition working directly with the Governor for passage of SJR O and an expanded Recreation Passport to model our state program after what the State Park Citizens' Advisory Committee recommended years ago when the original program was first being drafted. We support the recommendation of the Advisory Committee to build the program after the successful Wyoming program that is an "opt-out" rather than the current "opt-in" approach. We believe that after 10 years of the public being familiar with the incredible value of the Recreation Passport that it is prudent to return to the original model of the Recreation Passport. We continue to believe that this is an important fundamental move that will mean more money for our state parks and local recreation projects like trails and parks.

We are supportive of the need for more trail users, in both the motorized and non-motorized community who use our parks and trails to support those recreation assets with the purchase of a Recreation Passport. We understand that the DNR Director's interest in expanding requirements for possession of a Recreation Passport to extend to forest campground and state trailhead parking facilities necessitated a change in statute to allow this to occur. We are supportive of this proposal so long as there will be adequate opportunities for the public to be able to purchase both a daily pass or an annual Recreation Passport at or near these new designated parking facilities and that the added revenue will continue to be used for support of our state parks and local recreation projects including these new designated facilities.

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We remain hopeful that your legislation will move in concert with legislation to expand Recreation Passport to an opt-out format. With these changes, the state will be able to continue to invest in the number one recreational need among the citizens of the state--our trails and parks.

Sincerely,

Bob Wilson
Executive Director,
Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance

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