



1213 Center Street
P.O. Box 27187
Lansing, MI 48909

Phone 517-485-6022

Fax 517-347-8145

www.michigantrails.org

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Greetings Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Bob Wilson and I am the Executive Director of the Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance. We are the statewide voice for all non-motorized trail users in the state, helping people build, connect and promote trails for a healthier and more prosperous Michigan.

Our organization opposes HB 4954 as it is currently written and urges the committee to consider the importance of maintaining this vital source of funding for sidewalks and pathways that allow our citizens to get safely from home to work and school as well as provide safe routes for recreation.

Current law requires that at least 1% of the annual transportation budget be set aside for non-motorized transportation projects. This is a long-standing requirement that has contributed to countless non-motorized projects from bike lanes and wide shoulders, sidewalks, side paths, trail connectors, and even education. It has doubtlessly saved Michiganders from injury and death when traversing our roads and contributed to the safe routes to school that we all want for our children.

In smaller communities, we are truly talking about the impact of hundreds of dollars per year up to up to \$5 to \$6 million in Detroit. Also, it is important to note that it is 1% averaged over 10 years so some communities have the flexibility to bank the funds and then use them for larger projects. Ann Arbor, Grand Rapids, Lansing, and others spend 3% or more without going out of their way. Others need a requirement like this to ensure they look incorporate non-motorized into their planning.

When more and more of our members are relying upon trails that necessarily include funding from the transportation budget to help them travel from home to work and school as well as for basic recreation, it is important that we preserve this source of funding.

We would urge consideration of an amendment to the bill that will require the Transportation Commission to every 2 years assess the impacts of this funding and to make annual recommendations for spending similar to the manner in which the Natural Resources Trust Fund acts. I believe that with such a study, many more policy makers will come to

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appreciate the importance of this funding source on the health and well-being of the people of this state!



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