

Traverse Area Recreation
and Transportation Trails Inc.



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Connecting Communities

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Wednesday, September 4, 2019

State Representative Jack O'Malley
Chairman, House Transportation Committee
House Office Building
Lansing, MI 48909-7514

Dear Chairman O'Malley and members of the House Transportation
Committee:

TART Trails is a non-profit organization in Traverse City, Michigan
dedicated to increasing outdoor recreation opportunities for residents and
visitors to our area. We are part of a large conservation and business coalition
working for passage of an expanded Recreation Passport program in Michigan.

We support the recommendation of the Citizen's Advisory Committee to build
the program after the successful Montana 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 envisioned by the legislature and that
the citizens of this state are fully aware of the choice that can be made to
support the program. We also understand that current law allows the Secretary
of State up to \$1 million a year to help in the administration of the program.
These are funds that can be used to help those understand that the option to
purchase a Recreation Passport is clearly that—a voluntary election by
checking the box that you do not want to purchase a passport.

We applaud the actions of Representative Gary Howell and his colleague,
Representative Rebekah Warren in introducing this important package of bills
(HB 4486, 4775 and 4776) that will enhance the value of recreation
opportunities for all Michiganders.

We also support the proposed increase from 10% to 15% in the amount of the
Recreation Passport revenue going to the local recreation grants program that
helps to fund local trails and parks, which has been clearly proven in recent
state and local surveys to be the number one recreational need in the state.

Julie Clark, Executive Director