



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

Phone: 517-485-6022

Fax: 517-347-8145

[www.michigantrails.org](http://www.michigantrails.org)

August 21, 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:

We are a part of a large conservation and business coalition working for passage of an expanded Recreation Passport program to model our state program after what the State Park Citizens' Advisory Committee recommended over 10 years ago when the original program was first being discussed by the legislature.

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 remain hopeful that this legislation will move quickly and allow Michigan to finally embrace the original version of the Recreation Passport program that will provide significant increases in funding for both our state and local parks and trails.

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.

Sincerely,  
Bob Wilson  
Executive Director, Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance