

July XX, 2009

The Honorable James L. Oberstar  
Chairman  
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
2163 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John L. Mica  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
2165 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Peter A. DeFazio  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Highways and Transit  
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
B-370A Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John J. Duncan, Jr.  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Highways and Transit  
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
B-375 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Oberstar, Ranking Member Mica, Chairman DeFazio, and Ranking Member Duncan:

We write to express our strong support for including the Recreational Trails Program in the Surface Transportation Authorization Act of 2009. We applaud the committee leadership's action in providing for the continuation of this popular and effective program in the legislation marked up in the Highways and Transit Subcommittee on June 24, 2009.

Since its creation in the 1991 transportation bill (ISTEA), the Recreational Trails Program has helped Americans to be active and healthy, brought new economic vitality to communities across the nation, and unified often-divided trail interests to craft state trail plans and aid all trail interests. More than 20,000 projects have been funded under this program to date, including trail corridor purchases, trail construction and maintenance and environmental mitigation.

We further urge that the Surface Transportation Authorization Act provide adequate and fair funding levels for the program. Specifically, we request \$690 million over six years -- \$90 million in 2010, \$100 million in 2011, \$110 million in 2012, \$120 million in 2013, \$130 million in 2014, and \$140 million in 2015.

As you know the Recreational Trails Program is supported by taxes on fuel used in off-highway recreational vehicles. We request that \$2.5 million be allocated to a DOT study of off-highway recreational fuel use to ensure that the level of RTP funding truly reflects the federal fuel taxes paid for off-highway use. Finally, we ask that the funds allocated to the FHWA to administer the RTP each year be adjusted from a set amount to 1% of actual available annual funding to ensure that sufficient administrative resources are available for this valuable program.

Thank you for your consideration of these requests.

Sincerely,