

**S. 582/H.R. 1443: THE COMPLETE STREETS ACT OF 2009**

Complete Streets is a policy that ensures that the needs of all potential road users, including bicyclists, pedestrians, transit users and people with disabilities, are taken into account in the planning, design, operation and maintenance of all highways. No new funding is required for this policy. In fact, it will save tax dollars by avoiding the need for costly retrofits of poorly designed roads. Studies indicate that the presence of a well-designed Complete Streets policy helps increase the number of miles biked and walked. For example, the Complete Streets policy in Boulder, Colorado, helped reduce single occupant vehicle trips by 10 percent.

Although Delaware has a Complete Streets policy, it is an internal DelDOT policy that is not mandated by law. A national law will ensure that the policy remains in place over time and will provide more effective and consistent implementation across state lines. This is especially beneficial to a small state like Delaware because many of our cyclists cross state lines while commuting, running errands, or riding for recreational purposes.

**S. 2747/H.R. 3534: LAND AND WATER REAUTHORIZATION AND FUNDING ACT**

This bill will permanently dedicate \$900 million annually to The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). LWCF was established in 1964 by using a portion of off-shore oil and gas drilling fees to pay for conservation projects, such as land preservation and trails. Each year, \$900 million is authorized to the LWCF, with half of the funds traditionally going to Federal and half to state projects. Congress has appropriated the full amount only once. In most years, funding has been less than half of the authorized limit.

The President's FY2011 budget requests \$620 million for LWCF, a 30 percent increase over FY 2010. However, full annual funding of LWCF at \$900 million is necessary to enable Federal and state land management agencies to complete and fully protect natural, scenic, and historic trails. LWCF state assistance grants can provide funding to acquire and build trails throughout Delaware's state and local parks.

More than 80 percent of the public supports using funds from oil and gas fees to help preserve our natural areas. Active outdoor recreation contributes \$730 billion and 6.5 million jobs to the U.S. economy.

**S. 1156: THE SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROGRAM REAUTHORIZATION ACT**

**H.R. 4021: THE SAFE ROUTES TO HIGH SCHOOL ACT**

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is a national program to create safe and convenient ways for children to walk or bike to school. In 2005, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act—A Legacy (SAFETEA-LU) provided \$600 million over five years to enable state and local agencies to implement construction, education and encouragement programs around K-8 schools. At

the present time, SRTS still only applies to elementary and middle schools. Both S. 1156 and H.R. 4021 will expand SRTS eligibility to high schools. S. 1156 also increases funding to \$600 million annually.

Evidence shows that SRTS projects have increased walking and bicycling by between 20 and 200 percent and show crash reductions of up to 50 percent.

According to Delaware's SRTS Coordinator, Sarah Coakley, \$210,000 or approximately 7% of the funding utilized in Delaware has been spent on bicycle related projects. Of this, \$160,000 was spent or is in the process of being spent on three bike paths at Brader, Richey and Rehoboth Elementary Schools and on bike racks. The remaining \$50,000 has been spent on bike safety related activities. Ms. Coakley noted that she has received much interest from high schools as they have more students who walk or bike or who are interested in doing so, and therefore have more safety issues. Regarding passage of S. 1156/H.R. 4021, Ms. Coakley states, "I think it would make a lot of sense. There is a lot of demand for it here." She further noted that a number of Delaware high schools are located close to middle and elementary schools. "The high schools could be a great resource for the lower schools, providing walking/biking 'mentors' for example."

### **H.R. 3734: URBAN REVITALIZATION AND LIVABLE COMMUNITIES ACT**

H.R. 3734 will authorize \$445 million annually for the development and revitalization of urban parks and recreation infrastructure, including a range of cost-effective bicycling facilities, such as natural surface trails and bike skills areas. There has been no dedicated federal funding to support urban parks since the last round of grants were awarded in 2001 under the Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Act.

Almost 80 percent of the U.S. population resides in urban areas. Many of these communities have deteriorating infrastructure and limited open spaces. Urban parks and recreation facilities play a key role in improving the health of our nation's urban residents and communities by providing convenient opportunities that lead to increased physical activity. Mountain biking, one of the fastest growing outdoor recreation activities among youth, can be a part of the solution.

According to the CDC, creation or enhanced access to places conducive to physical activity led to a 26 percent increase in people exercising regularly. For the largest 85 U.S. cities with a total population of 57.2 million, the health savings from parks is an estimated \$3.08 billion.

In addition to the health savings, in areas where urban parks have been used as a redevelopment tool, surrounding vacancy rates have dropped by as much as 40 percent.