

VALERIE J. LONGHURST
MAJORITY WHIP
Fifteenth District



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE OF DELAWARE
LEGISLATIVE HALL
DOVER, DELAWARE 19901

COMMITTEES
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May 11th, 2012

Delaware House of Representatives
Capital Infrastructure Committee

Representative Helene Keeley, Chair:

We are writing to express our support of Governor Markell's proposed First State Trails and Pathways Plan. While this investment may seem costly, we must continue to look to all avenues that will increase long term returns on Delaware's economy.

Outdoor activities vastly contribute to our state's economy. Delaware already has amazing natural resources and parks for residents and visitors to enjoy, but we can enhance these resources through the expansion of our trail ways. Fortunately, bicycle tourism is a low impact, clean industry and so its expansion will have little negative impact. The Maine Department of Transportation performed a study in 2000 to find the economic effects of bicycle tourism. The results found a direct impact of \$36.3 million, solely from improving their state's trail ways.

Outside of tourism, the overall benefits of expanding Delaware's trail ways are significant. Studies show that homes located near bicycling and walking trails typically sell faster and at higher prices. Also, providing easy access to trails will promote a healthy, safe lifestyle for citizens throughout the First State.

We encourage you to support the Governor's efforts to improve the economic and physical health of our state through the expansion of our state's trail ways.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Valerie J. Longhurst.

Valerie J. Longhurst
House Majority Whip
Representative, 15th District

Handwritten signature of Peter C. Schwartzkopf.

Peter C. Schwartzkopf
House Majority Leader
Representative, 14th District

Handwritten signature of Michael A. Barbieri.

Michael A. Barbieri, Ph.D.
State Representative
18th District

Handwritten signature of Darryl M. Scott.

Darryl M. Scott
State Representative
31st District

Handwritten signature of Rebecca Walker.

Rebecca Walker
State Representative
19th District