

Dear Environment Committee:

I am writing to you in support of S.B. 1015, An Act Concerning the New England National Scenic Trail.

As a member of the New England Trail Stewardship Council, I learned first hand the importance of a National Trail system. The developed world we live and work in allows for little respite for our minds which in turn affects our overall health. A National Trail beckons folks to discover the natural world right in their own 'back yards' and each National Trail has unique features and biodiversity which permits people to gain a connection with the natural environment around them. Promotion of a National Trail is a positive for overall health, encourages family time which stimulates curiosity and conversations, and helps to shift our perspective of where we are in the world.

-Passage of this bill is important because it will elevate protection and recognition of the New England Trail to the same level as the Appalachian Trail.

-This bill will better position the Dept. of Energy & Environmental Protection to be an active and invested long-term partner in the trail's protection.

-Recommend removing language concerning "eminent domain" as it is not in the spirit of the NET's federal legislation which specifically removed this authority for the federal government.

-The NET is a tremendously valuable recreational asset for the citizens of Connecticut and I encourage the Environment Committee to support this bill.

Respectfully,

~Lynn Charest

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