

Testimony on H.B. No. 5415
An Act Concerning the Air Line Trail
Submitted to the Environment Committee
By
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I am writing in support of the extension/connection of the Air Line Trail to/through Portland, and into Middletown, CT. Developing the trail would be positive for many reasons, but the ones that stick out in my mind are as follows:

- 1. It would PROVIDE opportunity for individuals and families to get outside and exercise.**
- 2. It would CREATE a place for the appreciation/protection of the natural environment.**
- 3. It would ENHANCE the surrounding community by providing a place where recreation and positive interactions between community members in a natural setting take place.**
- 4. It would ATTRACT people to the area, both on a “tourist” basis, and making the area more attractive to people who want to live in a place where trails like this exist.**

People are hungry for the opportunity to have a place to walk, run, or bike that is safe from cars and traffic, in an attractive setting. I was recently at the Walkway over the Hudson State Park, another railway turned trail. Seeing the numbers on the trail, the diversity, and the happiness level of the people enjoying the park was an example to me of how successful such transformations of rail bed to public use can be. I sincerely hope that the Air Line Trail can become a positive, and exciting asset to the residents of Portland, Middletown, and the surrounding area through its extension and development.

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