

Dear Senators Abrams and Lesser,

I'm writing to fully support your proposed bill connecting Middletown to the Air Line Trail and the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail. I write this both as a private citizen who utilizes these trails with my family and in my professional role overseeing Recreation for the City of Middletown.

When I first moved to Middletown, I lived in the West Lake section of town along the Coginchaug River. We would walk our dog daily along the river bed and see some fellow dog walkers. About 2 years into our residence there, the Westlake bike path was built and the usage increased participation with the outdoors exponentially. It was a wonderful community builder, in addition to being a great recreational resource in our community. When we had our first children, it also served as a wonderful place to take them out in the stroller.

We moved closer to downtown Middletown where access to safe biking, especially with children, is limited. We live near the recently renovated Pat Kidney Complex, which has a paved walking path and serves as a wonderful and safe place for our young daughter to learn to ride her bike. There is a consistent flow of traffic there – both walkers and young bikers – which supports the theory “if you build it, they will come.” As is evidenced by the public hearing to take place here in Middletown tomorrow (Wed 2/13/19) on the Newfield St Corridor, there is great interest and energy around bikeways in our community.

In my role as Recreation Director, I fully support projects that promote health and well-being. Studies consistently show that moderate physical activity leads to positive well-being and health benefits. Furthermore, spending time outdoors lowers stress and anxiety. This bill is a win on all those fronts.

While I'm not able to attend the public hearing tomorrow, I did want to share my support and sincere hope that this bill passes. I know that my family would love to hop on a trail near our home rather than having to pack up the bikes in our car and I know our community members would take full advantage of this wonderful resource.

With sincere thanks for initiating this bill,

Cathy

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