

February 12, 2019

To whom it may concern:

Please accept this letter in support of SB775, establishment of the Central Connecticut Loop Trail.

As a recreational cycling participant, as well as a part time bike commuter from Bolton (on the Hebron line) into Hartford for work, I understand and appreciate the impact of improved walking/bike trails for both health and alternative commuting strategies.

The designation of the Central Connecticut Loop Trail, and completion of the ALT-FCT Connector, will benefit our state in the following ways:

1. Walking/Bike trails attract healthy individuals (both young and old) who appreciate nature and local recreation. Having such a significant bike loop will be an incentive for recreational users to spend their time and their dollars locally using the trails.
2. It will increase summer tourism into our state.
3. It will attract young people to the Hartford metropolitan area and help rejuvenate our aging workforce.
4. It will provide better opportunities for alternate commuting strategies, taking cars off our already busy streets.

The primary detractor from being able to use the existing trails in CT is the lack of connectivity. Particularly for cyclists, having to navigate miles from the end of one trail to the beginning of the next puts they cyclist at risk on busy streets, as well as acts as a disincentive to explore new areas. This connection will improve on that.

As a cyclist and walker, I can personally attest that the connection of the East Coast Greenway to the Hop River Trail at the end of 384 has been a significant improvement to both the cycling and walking experience. There was effectively no way to easily get to the Hop River Trail from the Bolton Notch area of Bolton due to the 384 interchange with Routes 6 and 44. The new connection has better enabled bike commuting into and out of Hartford all the way to Willimantic (and beyond), and the number of recreational users (both walkers and riders) has been significant, even during January and February, since opening the trail in late 2018. I'd expect the ALT-FCT Connector to have a similar impact.

Please support SB775.

Thanks,

Jason Norris

Bolton, CT