



Michigan House Transportation Committee
Representative Jack O'Malley, Chair
Lansing, Michigan

RE: HB 4486, 4775 and 4776

Dear Representative O'Malley,

August 30, 2019

The Blueways of St. Clair is a collection of 17 water trails in St. Clair County. We also have the first National Water Trail in Michigan; the Island Loop Route. The Blueways water trails have become very popular with visitors and locals alike over the last eight years. Our program is expanding every year as we develop trails and access sites. Our goal is to offer users a safe and exciting experience on the water.

Many of our trails use MDNR boat launches and access sites. We also use several local municipal parks that have been created and updated by using Michigan Recreation Passport grants. Both of these types of water access are supported with money from the Recreation Passport dollars.

It was a brilliant idea in 2010 to create the Recreation Passport program to fund recreation projects across the state. The success of it is undeniable, and it could be even more successful if legislation HB 4486, 4775 and 4776 pass!

The latest DNR Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Survey indicates that the number one recreation need in the state is more local parks and trails and among that need, the number one local recreation need is more non-motorized trails. By passing the above referenced legislation, it is believed that the funding for the Recreation Passport program could increase by 50%.

Please support this legislation by recommending passage of HB 4486, 4775 and 4776. By passing this important legislation, it will not only add more dollars for development of local parks and access points, but will also help preserve state forest campgrounds and trails, and historic and cultural sites in state parks.

The people of the State of Michigan are extremely proud of our parks and trails. Let's give them more to be proud of by supporting legislation HB 4486, 4775 and 4776. If you would like to talk to me about this topic, please contact me at the phone number below, or email me at leschenburg@stclaircounty.org.

Sincerely,

Lori J. Eschenburg,

Water Trail Manager, Blueways of St. Clair

St. Clair County Metropolitan Planning Commission

200 Grand River, Suite 202, Port Huron, MI 48060

810.989.6950

The Blueways of St. Clair
200 Grand River Avenue, Suite 202
Port Huron, Michigan 48060
(810) 989-6950