

Hon. Baron Hill  
United States House of Representatives  
223 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Re: H.R. 4671  
American Discovery Trail

As your constituent, I am writing to ask that you co-sponsor the National Discovery Trails Act, H.R. 4671, introduced February 23, 2010 by Rep. John Sarbanes of Maryland with Jeff Fortenberry of Nebraska as the lead co-sponsor. This legislation amends the National Trails System Act to create a new category of long-distance trails called national discovery trails and designates the American Discovery Trail as the first trail under that category.

This legislation has passed the Senate unanimously three times. Recently, similar legislation attracted 40 House co-sponsors spanning the ideological spectrum.

The American Discovery Trail is our nation's first coast-to-coast, multi-use trail. Its 6,800-mile route stretches across 15 states. The National Park Service performed a feasibility study for inclusion of the trail in the national trails system and recommended that this new national trail category be created.

I believe that you should co-sponsor this bill because:

It will benefit your district, our area, and the surrounding region. The

American Discovery Trail passes through Spencer County and much of your District. As you know, Spencer County is the home of Holiday World and Splashin' Safari Theme Park, Lake Rudolph Outdoor Resort and Campground, Lincoln Pioneer Village, Santa's Candy Castle, Lincoln State Park and Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial. According to a study completed by the University of Southern Indiana in 2008, the tourism industry at that time supported 32.3% of the total employment in Spencer County, and accounted for \$183.9 million in sales generated each year in the County and surrounding area. This industry continues to grow exponentially and is critical to the economy of this area. The ADT designation as a national discovery trail will attract tourist dollars and bring additional national visibility to our area. Many studies have found that trails and greenways positively affect property values, small business revenues, tourism, and even corporate relocations.

The ADT is an existing route: It follows existing trails, towpaths, country roads, city greenways, and small town sidewalks. It requires no new land acquisition and no new trail building. It's already in use by the public on public

rights-of-way linked together across the country. To enhance the ADT route, the Town of Santa Claus currently is engaging in transportation planning which is anticipated to include recreational trails to connect the ADT to the Town's existing federally-funded trail network, including a trail which would be a dedicated recreational trail along the ADT route between the Town and State Park and National Memorial.

It benefits the country: As the first coast-to-coast trail, it supplies the missing links in the national trails system. The ADT connects five national scenic, 12 national historic, and 34 national recreation trails; passes through urban centers like Cincinnati and San Francisco; leads to 14 national parks and 16 national forests; and visits 10,000 sites of historic, cultural, and natural significance, including locally Lincoln State Park and Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial only 5 miles west of the Town. It is truly the backbone of the national trails system.

It benefits our citizens' health. Walking and bicycle riding are great ways to keep fit and burn calories and help fight the obesity epidemic. The ADT brings a national trail to the people. It is within 20 miles of 32 million people. It is cost-effective and benefits local trails. The ADT has always been a public-private partnership, with the vast majority of the work being done by volunteers, and official designation will enhance our ability to increase this leverage. The presence of the ADT has resulted in many local trails being developed across the country.

For these and many more reasons, we respectfully request that you sign on as a co-sponsor of the National Discovery Trails Act, H.R. 4671, and use your efforts to pass this bill into law. The member of Rep. Sarbanes' staff who is coordinating the bill is Jim Notter, (202) 225-4016 or [jim.notter@mail.house.gov](mailto:jim.notter@mail.house.gov). The member of Rep. Fortenberry's staff is Alan Feyerherm, (202) 225-4806 or [alan.feyerherm@mail.house.gov](mailto:alan.feyerherm@mail.house.gov).

Thank you for your consideration of this request.