

Congressman Tom Tiffany
451 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Subject: Oppose H.R. 4924, the Rails to Trails Landowner Rights Act

Dear Congressman Tiffany:

This is **YOUR NAME** with **YOUR ORGANIZATION**. As a **CONSTITUENT/ STATEWIDE/ REGIONAL ORGANIZATION**, I urge you to oppose H.R. 4924, the Rails to Trails Landowner Rights Act. This legislation threatens both existing trails including the Eisenbahn State Trail, the Hank Aaron State Trail, the Wild River State Trail and future trail development, including **INSERT EXAMPLE TRAIL OR TRAILS**. Trails provide Wisconsin residents and visitors with safe and convenient places to be active outdoors, generate new jobs and economic activity, and contribute to overall quality of life. This bill will undermine our progress and threaten the economic well-being of the many small and rural trail communities that rely on trails for economic opportunity.

This legislation would destroy the viability of railbanking, undercutting the 40-year-old law at the foundation of the nation and Wisconsin's decades-long movement to preserve unused railroad corridors as multiuse trails. Railbanking allows a corridor to be converted into a public-use trail, providing community benefits while maintaining the corridor's integrity should it be reactivated in the future for rail service. Railbanking occurs through mutual consent between the railroad owner and a trail sponsor, such as a government agency or nonprofit organization. This law has allowed Wisconsin to preserve **INSERT RELEVANT EXAMPLE FOR THE STATE AND/OR YOUR COMMUNITY**.

H.R. 4924 undermines railbanking by 1) shifting financial liability from the federal government to trail sponsors; 2) requiring trail sponsors to obtain a signed statement of willingness to railbank from every adjacent landowner within 30 days of filing a statement of willingness to railbank, 3) requiring trails sponsors to assume lifetime responsibility for trail maintenance and costly and wasteful studies, 4) requiring the federal Surface Transportation Board (STB) to both make recommendations for local trail maintenance and operations and make recommendations for narrowing the width of existing railbanked corridors.

Each of these new requirements would make new railbanking virtually impossible and threaten existing trails which support Wisconsin's economic growth and quality of life. As a **CONSTITUENT/ STATEWIDE/ REGIONAL ORGANIZATION**, I urge you to oppose H.R. 4924, the Rails to Trails Landowner Rights Act.

Sincerely,

YOUR NAME