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S.446 and H.769

An Act Expanding Access To Trails For People Of All Abilities.

This is a bill being proposed in the state of Massachusetts by Senator Joanne Comerford, and Representative Michelle Ciccolo. The goal of the bill is to increase accessibility in the state trail system.

If passed, the bill would establish a working group comprised of people living with disabling conditions, trail professionals, and people concerned with the rights, health, and welfare of people with disabilities.

The Trail Access Working Group will evaluate the current trail system, review best practices, as well as state and federal laws or requirements, engage the public to seek their feedback. Within one year of forming, the working group will produce a report of their findings.

The Department of Conservation and Recreation will be required to respond to the working group's report with a plan for implementing the working group's suggestions within three years. With a goal of increasing access to the trail system, including the number of accessible trails, and the total dollars spent on accessibility.

You can read this bill in its entirety:

Senate Version: <https://malegislature.gov/Bills/193/S446>

House Version: <https://malegislature.gov/Bills/193/H769>

Why This Bill Is Needed:

It will help to make a more equitable trail system, address some of the environmental and social justice issues in outdoor recreation, improve public health, and increase access for people with disabling conditions to public land, which is a civil right.

We have a disproportionate number of inaccessible trails around the state. The current trail system doesn't reflect our population and its needs. This bill would help to create a more equitable approach to the trail system.

Learn More: <https://www.unpavedtrailsforall.org/massachusetts-stats>

Information about accessible trails is hard to find or nonexistent. A comprehensive study of the trail system would begin to address the need for more information. Part of the Work Group's suggestions could be to create a centralized source of information about accessible trails.

Trail funding doesn't reflect our population, and isn't addressing the decades of inequities and exclusion that took place in outdoor recreation.

How To Support This Bill:

As An Individual

- Contact your State Senator and Representative and ask them to support S.446 (Senate) H.769 (House).
 - <https://malegislature.gov/Search/FindMyLegislator>
- Write an opinion piece or letter for your local newspaper.
- Post about this bill on social media.
- Sign the Petition: https://www.change.org/p/help-get-more-accessible-unpaved-recreation-trails-all-persons-trails-in-massachusetts?utm_source=share_petition&utm_medium=custom_url&recruited_by_id=cd7ae700-1491-11ec-8df6-0342224c402b
- Sign the support letter: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fX70EWtF2a0CqTDcIT7-VUN-5rdzwvoJ41pKR40z7D4/edit>

- Sign Up for our emails to stay informed.

As An Organization:

- Contact Legislators, and the Joint Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, to let them know your organization supports this bill.
- Let your membership know about this bill. Direct them to more information, and ask them to contact their legislators.
- Post about this bill on social media.
- Write an opinion piece in your local paper
- Contact us about to be listed as a supporting organization.

Supporting Organizations & Municipalities:

[All Out Adventures](#)

[Amherst Disability Access Advisory Committee](#)

[Appalachian Mountain Club- Massachusetts](#)

[Berkshire Natural Resources Council](#)

[Boston Disability Commission Advisory Board](#)

[City Of Northampton](#)

[City Of Revere Commission On Disabilities](#)

[Easthampton Commission On Disability](#)

[Framingham Disability Commission](#)

[Friends Of Northampton Trails](#)

[Greenfield Commission On Disability Access](#)

[Holyoke Disability Commission](#)

[Lynn Disability Commission](#)

[Needham Commission On Disabilities](#)

[New Bedford Commission For Citizens With Disabilities](#)

[New England Mountain Biking Association](#)

[Northampton Disability Commission](#)

[South Hadley Commission On Disabilities](#)

[Transitions CBDS, Berkshire County Arc](#)

[The Trustees](#)

[Town Of Amherst](#)

[Waypoint Adventure](#)

[Westport Commission On Disability](#)

[Youth Climate Action Now](#)

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