



**APPALACHIAN
MOUNTAIN CLUB**
SINCE 1876

March 10, 2025
Chair Robert Craven
House Judiciary Committee
State House, Providence, RI 02903

Re: The Appalachian Mountain Club OPPOSES H5905, An Act Relating to Parks and Recreational Areas- Public Use of Private Lands-Liability Limitations

Dear Chair Craven and Distinguished Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

The Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) is a people-centered conservation organization whose 2,000 Rhode Island members lead thousands of participants in outdoor adventures each year. Our members and supporters rely on public access to municipal and state lands for recreational activities like hiking, biking, climbing, and paddling. I am writing today to express AMC's opposition to H5905 and any efforts to roll back public access to municipal and state lands where the public recreates.

Recreating outdoors, through activities like hiking, biking, and paddling, is scientifically proven to provide a myriad of mental and physical health benefits to participants. Rhode Islanders need publicly accessible lands to recreate on and to enhance the Ocean State's \$1.9 billion outdoor recreation economy which supports over 17,000 jobs for Rhode Islanders. If passed, H5905 could partially or fully close the municipal and state lands Rhode Islanders recreate on, discourage state and municipal initiatives to protect open space for outdoor recreation and discourage local land trust efforts to develop trails and public recreational use of the lands they are protecting. It is critical that state and municipal lands remain fully open and accessible to the public so that all residents of Rhode Island can access outdoor recreation opportunities, for all the mental and physical health benefits they provide and support the outdoor recreation economy.

Thank you for hearing AMC's concerns regarding H5905 and its efforts to roll back public access to recreational lands and infrastructure. I urge the House Judiciary Committee to oppose H5905 to ensure that state and municipal lands are protected and remain open for public use and recreation. If you have questions or would like additional information, please contact Rae Ettenger at rettenger@outdoors.org

Sincerely,

Rae Ettenger
New England Conservation Policy Coordinator
Appalachian Mountain Club