



November 2, 2021

Office of U.S. Representative Greg Pence, Indiana 6<sup>th</sup> District  
Attn: Chief of Staff Hillary Lassiter and Legislative Assistant Kyle Robertson  
211 Cannon HOB  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Re: Support Letter for H.R. 4878 and the American Discovery Trail

Dear Rep. Pence,

Our organization, One Dearborn, Inc., is the central economic development office for Dearborn County, Indiana. We play several roles including attracting and retaining businesses, supporting efforts to grow population in our county and the state, advocating for more housing options in order to meet the workforce demands of our existing employers, and supporting and leading local quality of place and quality of life projects.

I am writing to request that Rep. Pence lend his support for House Resolution 4878, the National Discovery Trails Act, and perhaps even consider co-sponsoring this bi-partisan legislation. One Dearborn supports H.R. 4878 in regard to its provisions elevating the importance and visibility of the American Discovery Trail (ADT) by designating it as a federally recognized "Discovery Trail" within the National Trails System. Such designation would authorize signage of the ADT across the nation, including Dearborn County.

Indiana is one of three states in the United States to have two branches of the coast-to-coast ADT, which includes more than 6,800 miles of combinations of trails, streets, and roads stretching from Cape Henlopen State Park, Delaware, to Pt. Reyes National Seashore, California. The ADT's stint through southern Indiana would cross Dearborn County and come near our well-established and regional Dearborn Trail along the Ohio River.

Utilizing existing public lands, and overseen by volunteers, the ADT incorporates trails designed for hiking, bicycle and equestrian use. Because it connects five national scenic trails, 12 national historic trails, and 35 national recreational trails, and many other local and regional trails, it is the east-west backbone for the national trails system. It passes through metropolitan areas like San Francisco and Cincinnati, traces numerous pioneer trails, leads to 14 national parks and 16 national forests and visits more than 10,000 sites of historic, cultural and natural significance.

Our 2018 One Dearborn County Regional Economic Development Action Plan (<https://1dearborn.org/uploadIMG/rfUploads/Reports/RegionalEconomicDevelopmentPlan.pdf>) identified eight challenges and opportunities with the most potential to favorably impact all communities in the county. Dubbed our Big 8 Economic Drivers, these include: housing, trail



connectivity, downtown redevelopment, tourism & culture, business retention & attraction, U.S. 50 & transportation, and infrastructure. Priorities of the trail connectivity element of the strategic plan aligns well with the ADT initiative. As economic developers, One Dearborn knows multi-use trails are key for luring new talent and investment to Hoosier communities.

Additionally, One Dearborn completed a Dearborn County Trails Report (<https://www.1dearborn.org/uploadIMG/rfUploads/Reports/Dearborn%20County%20Trails%20Report%202020.pdf>) in August 2020. This report provided an assessment of existing multi-use trail assets in Lawrenceburg and the county, including the Dearborn Trail – touted in the report as Dearborn County’s important “backbone” trail – where the pergola swings will be located. Projects such as this increasing use of the Lawrenceburg riverfront portion of the Dearborn Trail may catalyze new trail connections. The trails report shows these connections could one day lead to connectivity of the American Discovery Trail to our cities and towns.

Please share our support of H.R. 4878 as it awaits a hearing in the House Committee on Natural Resources.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Perleberg". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mike Perleberg  
Executive Director  
One Dearborn, Inc.  
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