



Larry Hogan, Governor
Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor
Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio, Secretary

April 10, 2019

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Cynthia Brown – Chief, Section of Administration
Office of Proceedings
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423

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RE: Docket EP 753 – Petition for Rulemaking

Ms. Brown:

I wanted to take a moment to ask the Surface Transportation Board consider the recent petition by the Rails to Trails Conservancy to expand the initial negotiating period for railbanking to one year and to also consider extension when good cause is demonstrated. Some of Maryland Park Service's most popular facilities are our trails in railbanked corridors – the Torrey C Brown Trail north of Baltimore and Western Maryland Rail Trail near Hancock in particular are both thriving recreation destinations that also provide important alternative transportation corridors.

As Board members surely know, completing negotiations to railbank a corridor can be an extremely complicated process. But the payoffs are proven time again across the nation. Not only via successful trails but also preserving these corridors intact for if or when they are again needed as part of the rail system. While one year may seem long, dealing with ownership issues or regulatory details often reaching back a century or more, it quickly becomes a mere blip in the full life of a rail line.

Regards,

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