

David Cress  
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Portland OR 97203

April 8, 2025

Dear Co-Chairs Lieber and Sanchez and members of the joint committee on Ways and Means<

I am writing to express my strong support for the development of the 82-mile Salmonberry Trail, which will connect the communities of the Willamette Valley to the Oregon Coast. This visionary project will not only benefit our residents and visitors but also contribute to the long-term economic, public health, and transportation goals of Oregon.

The Salmonberry Trail offers tremendous potential for **economic development**, particularly for the small, rural communities it will pass through. By attracting tourists and outdoor enthusiasts, the trail will create new opportunities for local businesses and help drive Oregon's economic recovery, especially in our coastal and rural areas. These communities will benefit from increased visitation and spending, bolstering their economies while offering a sustainable way for people to experience Oregon's natural beauty.

Additionally, the trail will have significant **public health benefits**. Encouraging physical activity and outdoor recreation is critical to improving the physical and mental well-being of our residents. The Salmonberry Trail will provide a safe and accessible route for walking, cycling, and other forms of exercise, promoting a healthier population statewide.

The trail also offers **transportation safety** advantages by providing an off-road route for schoolchildren, cyclists, and pedestrians. With Oregon's highways often hazardous for those on foot or on bikes, the Salmonberry Trail will reduce the reliance on busy roads, creating a much safer environment for everyone, particularly in rural areas.

In terms of **equity and access**, the Salmonberry Trail will expand opportunities for historically underserved and rural communities to engage with the outdoors. These areas, often overlooked in terms of access to public parks and recreational spaces, will benefit from the expanded access to green space and recreation that the trail provides.

The **sustainable infrastructure** of the trail cannot be overstated. By repurposing an existing rail corridor, the Salmonberry Trail is an environmentally conscious project that minimizes new construction and maximizes the use of existing infrastructure. This approach ensures that the trail is both long-lasting and low-impact, minimizing environmental disruption while serving the needs of future generations.

Finally, it's important to note that the Salmonberry Trail has **broad support** from local leaders, public health experts, and community members across Oregon. There is a shared understanding that this trail will be a transformative project that delivers lasting value to Oregonians and visitors alike.

For all these reasons, I strongly urge you to support the funding and development of the Salmonberry Trail. This project represents a unique opportunity to invest in Oregon's future by fostering economic development, improving public health, enhancing transportation safety, and ensuring equitable access to outdoor spaces.

Thank you for your consideration, and for your continued service to our state.

Sincerely,  
David Cress