

Chair Wiggam, Vice Chair Stephens, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the House State and Local Government Committee, I wish to thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony for HB 476.

My name is Allen Kekel and I represent the Beaver Creek Sportsman's Club as their President. I am here today to express our hope House Bill 288 will be passed and become law. Taking our club's property for the proposed bike trail will negatively impact our club in several ways.

As proposed, the trail comes close to our indoor shooting range and requires the removal or relocation of our outdoor archery range. We are deeply concerned should repairs, remodeling, or heaven forbid our facility becomes badly damaged due to fire, or mother nature, the current codes may forbid us to repair or rebuild due to the trail coming too close to our building. If this should become reality, it very well could be the end of the club.

We are a club of 136 members. The average age of our membership is over 65. At 60, I am one of the younger members. Membership fees, fish fries during Easter season, and our once a year spaghetti dinner are the clubs only means of income which can be budgeted yearly. We do not generate an income through sales or manufacturing.

Like many sportsman's clubs, churches, and other organizations, it is becoming increasingly more difficult to attract the younger generations to enjoy the outdoors. It is hard to compete with the electronics and social media absorbing the minds of our youth today. The Beaver Creek Sportsman's Club strives to bring younger members into the club. Our club is not restricted to men, as we have lady members as well. But unfortunately, they are the minority along with youth involvement.

Due to the nature of our club as a shooting, fishing, archery and hunting facility, we will be required to install and maintain a fence with gate along the proposed bike trail. We can't absorb any liability issues should they arise from trespassers. The cost alone to install the fence and gate is not the only negative factor. The proposed fence will make our club look more like a prison, than a club which is inviting people to attend our events and become involved in the outdoors, and less with electronics and social media. In the past we have done youth days teaching them the art of enjoying the outdoors in a variety of ways. It may be through archery, shooting, fishing or hiking. We would love to continue with this tradition but are concerned the fence will become an intimidating obstacle to attracting single mothers with kids to our events designed for their enjoyment, recreation and education.

Chair Hambley, Vice Chair Patton, Ranking Member Brown, and members of the House Civil Justice Committee, I want to once again thank you for listening to my testimony and respectfully ask for your support and vote to pass HB 476.

Thank you