



# Ohio Trails Partnership

109 North Main Street, 800 Performance Place, Dayton, Ohio 45402

May 13, 2025

Ohio Senate Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee

Re: Eminent Domain concern

Greetings Chairman Schaffer, Vice Chair Kohler, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson and Members of the Senate Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee,

I appreciate the opportunity to submit written testimony in opposition to language the Ohio House Finance Committee inserted into the HB 96 at the last hour.

I am President of the Ohio Trails Partnership an umbrella organization of 5 non-motorized trail user groups throughout Ohio. We are proud to be a source of knowledge and expertise to both public and private entities regarding the high value of recreational trails.

The language I am referring to is the prohibition of the use of eminent domain for recreational trails.

The members of the Ohio Trails Partnership (OTP) are very concerned as to the potential unintended consequences that may occur with such a major policy shift being included in the state budget bill. While I have never been associated with the establishment of a trail using eminent domain, I know that it can be a useful tool for identifying the true owners of a parcel of land, as one example.

OTP strongly recommends removing the unvetted language in lines 17,110 thru 17,113 or adopt amendment #SC314 (aka the Fischer amendment) which is very narrow language that addresses the only contentious situation we have ever heard of regarding the eminent domain for a recreational trail.

The language the House inserted to the budget uses a sledgehammer when only a scaple is needed to fix the only situation that has caused years and years of controversy. Lets' put this issue to bed by removing the language or adopting SC314.

Thank you for your attention and consideration to this very serious matter.

Sincerely,  
Steve Walker, President  
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