



CCBA Testimony at Legislative Public Hearing, February 2, 2007

The Central Connecticut Bicycle Alliance (**CCBA**) strongly endorses the Act Concerning An Appropriation For The East Coast Greenway. CCBA is a non-profit organization which promotes bicycling and other non-motorized transportation because they are healthy, environmentally friendly, and economical. The Connecticut portion of the East Coast Greenway represents a vital link in a multi-use trail network that will extend from Maine to Florida. There is increasing and compelling evidence that multi-use trails are not only healthful and environmentally sound, but that they promote economic well-being, while increasing tourism and quality of life in those communities and states which support their development.

CCBA hears from many Connecticut residents that they would like to bike more and more often. However, they are intimidated by the overall bike-unfriendliness of most streets in our state. We believe that much needs to be done to improve bicycle facilities that would help make our streets safer for cyclists and all users. As part of the promotion of a bicycle and pedestrian-friendly Connecticut, we believe that more and improved trails are an essential catalyst to get more people out of their cars onto bicycles or on foot. Using the trails, Connecticut residents will be able to do their errands, spend quality time with their families, and enjoy the beauty of this state in a healthy, non-polluting way.

Although many people realize exercise is important for maintaining good health, most do not regularly exercise. The U.S. Surgeon General estimates that a significant majority of American adults are not regularly active. A completed East Coast Greenway will provide a safe, inexpensive avenue for regular exercise for people living in many parts of Connecticut.

We also know that every mile driven in an automobile produces, on average, 1 lb. of carbon dioxide, 10 grams of carbon monoxide, as well as hydrocarbons, and nitrous oxides. A completed East Coast Greenway will provide a place for enjoyable and safe non-automobile transportation, which reduces air pollution. In addition, by protecting land along rivers and streams, the greenway will prevent soil erosion and filter pollution caused by agricultural and road runoff, thereby protecting important habitat and providing corridors for people and wildlife.

In communities and regions across the state, numerous groups like CCBA are trying to address their individual pieces of a multi-use trail system in Connecticut. By providing money to complete the Connecticut portion of the East Coast Greenway, the state will clearly say that it values the health and quality of life for its citizens.