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LRB103 29370 ECR 55759 r

1 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, Millions of Americans have discovered the joys of
3 walking, running, hiking, and cycling the rapidly expanding
4 trails that crisscross our great nation; and

5 WHEREAS, Central Illinois is at the heart of and is a
6 critical link for the 6,800-mile American Discovery Trail, the
7 3,700-mile Great American Rail-Trail, and the 535-mile Grand
8 Illinois Trail; and

9 WHEREAS, The Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage
10 Area and the Illinois Hennepin Canal Parkway State Park almost
11 reach from Chicagoland to the Mississippi River, aside from a
12 15.7-mile gap between the City of LaSalle and the Village of
13 Bureau in central Illinois, along the scenic Illinois River;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, When this 15.7-mile gap becomes a trail along
16 existing rail lines, these great and grand trails from the
17 Atlantic to the Pacific and across Illinois will be, in
18 essence, linked at their center here in America's Heartland;
19 and

20 WHEREAS, Leading citizens and organizations in central
21 Illinois and Washington, D.C. have come together to work to

1 connect this "missing link" in our trails systems, including
2 the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the National
3 Rails-to-Trails Conservancy in Washington, D.C.; and

4 WHEREAS, There are also a number of supportive community
5 leaders and officials all along the 200 miles of the Hennepin
6 and I&M Canals, including Senator Win Stoller, Senator Sue
7 Rezin, former member of Congress and U.S. Secretary of
8 Transportation and current U.S. Rails-to-Trails Hall of Famer
9 Ray LaHood, former Mayor of Ottawa Robert Eschbach, La Moille
10 School District Superintendent Jay McCracken, Inga Carus,
11 Chairman, Carus LLC, community leader Todd Volker, and many
12 others; and

13 WHEREAS, Further proponents and supporters of
14 Rails-to-Trails projects include Democrats and Republicans,
15 governments and nonprofits, and citizens all across central
16 Illinois; and

17 WHEREAS, Significant funding has been appropriated for
18 Rails-to-Trails projects in the 2022 U.S. Surface
19 Transportation Act; therefore, be it

20 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL
21 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE HOUSE OF
22 REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING HEREIN, that we enthusiastically

1 support Rails-to-Trails projects to make a reality of
2 connecting Americans from coast to coast and from Chicago to
3 all of Illinois through the marvelous trails of our nation and
4 State.