

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Gavin Dixon [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, May 5, 2025 10:30 PM
To: House Transportation
Subject: Opposition to HB136

Transportation Committee,

I am writing in opposition to HB 136. The bill is a clear attempt to support the interests of the well off landowners who are benefitting from free use of railroad property while excluding the general public from these benefits. This bill does more to harm the practical and thoughtful use of public right of ways than it does to protect private property.

Please do not advance or pass this bill.

-Gavin Dixon

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Sarah Glaser [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, May 5, 2025 10:28 PM
To: House Transportation
Subject: Opposition for HB 136

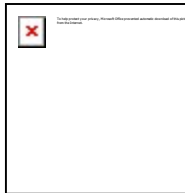
Dear Alaska Legislators,

I am writing to voice my strong opposition to HB136.

As a former bike commuter from West 31st Street, I feel that the extension of the Fish Creek Trail would make Anchorage a safer, more bikeable, more liveable city.

Sincerely,
Sarah Glaser

[REDACTED]
Anchorage, Alaska 99508



SARAH K. GLASER

t. 207 449 2266

w. www.glacierlines.com

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Sophie Littee [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, May 5, 2025 10:27 PM
To: House Transportation
Subject: Fish Creek Trail

Dear Transportation Committee,

Please do not block the Fish Creek Trail from being accessible to bikers and pedestrians who seek safe year round passage to the coastal Trail, as a connection between Midtown and downtown or to other recreational opportunities.

The Fish Creek Trail has broad support and is a giant asset that enriches the health of our community. A few private citizens should not have the right to block access to this right of way. Please oppose HB136 and HB142 so that we can allow members of our community to have a safe way to travel by bike, skate or foot.

Thank you,
Sophie Littée

[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK 99517

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Ben Sullender [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, May 5, 2025 10:24 PM
To: House Transportation
Subject: Strong opposition to HB136

Dear House Transportation committee,

I am writing in strong opposition to HB136, which would derail access for the Fish Creek Trail Connector project by re-allocating property rights on railroads.

I spent 5 years walking portions of the Fish Creek Trail nearly every day, between where my girlfriend (now wife) rented a house and my place on Woodland Park Drive. Our large Great Pyrenees dog loved it. I bike commuted from there to downtown Anchorage, and had to navigate a maze of streets and sidewalks and kept a mental tally of how many cars would hit me if I hadn't stopped, in a crosswalk, with the "walk" signal. Now, as a property owner and a parent-to-be, having safe communities, safe transportation options (e.g. bike trails) and public trail access is both essential to quality of life and what makes Anchorage great.

Let's make sure that we can complete projects like the Fish Creek Trail connector, rather than attempt to force through an unpopular and unnecessary bill like HB136 that would block residents from accessing trail networks. This bill seems like a power grab from a handful of already very rich people, that would benefit the super wealthy at the direct expense of everyone else in Anchorage that loves how greenbelts connect our city.

I will be keeping a close eye on this bill.

-Ben Sullender
[REDACTED]

Anchorage, AK 99508

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Joshua Gray [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, May 5, 2025 9:50 PM
To: House Transportation
Subject: Support for Fish Creek Trail - Opposition to HB 136

I would like to show my continued support for the Fish Creek Trail connection to the Coastal Trail. My family has attended multiple Open Houses, called in to Turnagain Community Council, and provided written comments - all in support of the construction of Fish Creek Trail connection. This trail connection will be so valuable for west Anchorage, and continue the trail system city-wide. We all dream of this connection, not just for recreation, but to better access downtown, commuting, and safety (avoiding busy streets). But most of all, I hope that someday soon, my 2 year old son can learn to ride a bike on this trail, safe from vehicles, and make his way down to the Coastal trail to enjoy snacks and relax on the beach.

There are so many friends, family, and community members that also support this trail for their own reason. I hate to think that a small but mighty/connected few (whether it be corporations or members of the public that want to 'preserve their privacy') could keep this amazing trail connection opportunity from serving the greater community.

Thank you for considering my comment and the betterment of our community - for both safety and recreation.

Josh Gray and family

Griffen Sukkaew

From: John Mahaffey [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, May 5, 2025 9:24 PM
To: House Transportation
Subject: strongly oppose HB136

I strongly oppose HB136 as it will likely result in major access issues for remote properties along the railbelt that have used community trails for many years. These trails are essential for accessing private property and cabins that have established routes often through other private property.
Please OPPOSE this bill.

John

Griffen Sukkaew

From: will c. [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, May 5, 2025 9:21 PM
To: House Transportation
Subject: HB136

I strongly oppose HB136. Private landowners should not be given a tool to block public access. As you probably know, passage of HB136 would threaten the Fish Creek trail extension, which has broad public support and we have voted in favor of multiple times. Having to pay back a million dollars of federal funds would be icing on an awful cake. Please shut this bill down. Thank you!

-Will Corbridge, [REDACTED], Anchorage 99517

Griffen Sukkaew

From: michal [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, May 5, 2025 9:16 PM
To: House Transportation; Sen. Matt Claman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Ashley Carrick; Rep. Carolyn Hall
Subject: Please oppose HB 136

Hi

I live in West Anchorage and am emailing again to ask you to please oppose HB 136.

Although its proponents deny that the bill is about the Fish Creek Trail extension, the bill would effectively end that construction project. That is why I oppose it. I'm the dad of two school aged boys, and we bike frequently. This trail would connect the Fish Creek Trail to the coastal trail. It would be a wonderful addition to many people who live in the vicinity. It would provide a safe way for non-drivers, especially kids, to access the coastal trail. There is wide support in the community for this trail. Please don't let a couple of land owners along the railroad stop a trail that would benefit so many people. While I appreciate the privacy concerns of those landowners, stopping the construction of a trail that would benefit so many people is not the solution.

Finally, according to a news story, the sponsor of the bill has a consulting company that was hired by the landowners who have opposed this extension for years. It seems like his financial interest in pleasing those landowners should be made known.

Thank you for your time.

Michal Stryszak
Anchorage 99517

From: Ann Courtney [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, May 5, 2025 9:05 PM
To: House Transportation
Subject: HB 136

On May 6, 2025, this committee will hold hearings on House Bill 136. The purpose of this email is to register my opposition to the bill.

The Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC) possesses an exclusive use easement that extends 100 feet on each side of the center line of the railroad's tracks. House Bill 136 proposes to amend the Alaska Railroad Corporation Act, the ARRC's enabling legislation, to provide that the ARRC "shall allow an owner of real property subject to an easement in favor of the corporation to use the property in a manner that does not unreasonably interfere with the corporation's use of the property for the purpose of the easement."

The proposed amendment is inconsistent with the US Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit's declaration in *Alaska Railroad Corporation v. Flying Crown Subdivision*, No. 22-35573 (Dec. 29, 2023), cert denied (May 28, 2024). There, the ARRC filed an action to quiet title to property within its exclusive use easement to which an Anchorage subdivision claimed a right to use. The subdivision challenged the ARRC's assertions regarding its exclusive use easement, claiming that the ARRC did not actually have such an easement. After analyzing extensive legislative history regarding the ARRC, the 9th Circuit ruled that the ARRC did indeed possess an exclusive use easement to the property in question and the subdivision had no right to use the property for its own purposes. The subdivision attempted to obtain review in the US Supreme Court, but the Court denied its petition.

House Bill 136 is nothing more than another attempt by the bill's sponsors to take a shot at the ARRC's exclusive use easement. By using the word "shall" in the proposed amendment, the sponsors are attempting to force the ARRC to carve up its easement to suit their desired uses. Such a mandate is inconsistent with the 9th Circuit's pronouncement of exclusivity.

The proposed bill further states that the mandate to the ARRC shall apply as long as the requesters' use of the property does not "unreasonably interfere" with the ARRC's use of the property subject to the easement. That standard is fatally vague. Who determines what is "reasonable" and what is "unreasonable"? What standards are used in making that determination? The ARRC's exclusive use easement is grounded in railroad safety. That issue is reserved solely for the ARRC and the Federal Railroad Administration, a department of the US Department of Transportation. It is not vested in lay people who wish to use property within the easement.

In short, House Bill 136 is little more than the bill's sponsors' attempt to get through the back door what they did not get through the front door of the 9th Circuit's courthouse. For this and the other reasons set forth above, I oppose House Bill 136.

Ann Courtney

[REDACTED]

Anchorage, AK 99517

Acourtney500@ [gmail.com](mailto:Acourtney500@gmail.com)

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Cory Hinds [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, May 5, 2025 8:44 PM
To: House Transportation
Subject: HB 136 comments

Hello Transportation Committee,

I am a landowner living on the west side of Anchorage and have been eagerly awaiting the Fish Creek trail extension to the coast. I do not support HB 136 because it would allow private landowners to block trails and other public infrastructure in the railroad corridor.

The Fish Creek Trail, which has broad public support and funding already in place, could be canceled if this bill passes, and the Municipality of Anchorage would have to pay back over \$1 million in federal funding.

Trails make our communities safer, healthier, and more connected. We shouldn't prioritize private interests over public access.

Fencing can and should be included for projects in the railroad ROW, which addresses adjacent landowner concerns.

Cory Hinds
[REDACTED], Anchorage.

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Mariel Terry <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, May 5, 2025 8:36 PM
To: House Transportation
Cc: Rep. Ky Holland
Subject: Oppose HB 136

House Transportation Committee,

I am writing to express my opposition to HB 136.

I am an Alaskan resident. I was born at Providence hospital 33 years ago. I have lived in the Anchorage municipality for the majority of my life.

Alaska Railroad easements should remain for the people, not individual landowners. The Fish Creek Trail project will provide a much-needed corridor connecting Midtown and Spenard to the coastal trail. Having lived in West Anchorage and the Spenard area, I understand how important this connecting trail will be for the community. Safe pedestrian routes are especially important in light of Anchorage's egregiously high pedestrian fatality rate. It is ridiculous that there is any opposition to an increase in Anchorage's pedestrian infrastructure. I understand that some land-owners may want to protect their sense of privacy but to put this over the freedom of movement and access to green space for thousands of others is unacceptable. Perhaps these landowners need reminding that they are part of a greater community; they might consider participating in it rather than vouching for their own individual interests over those of their neighbors. The Fish Creek Trail has rampant community support and has been included in the Anchorage Areawide Trails Plan for nearly 30 years.

Recharacterizing AK Railroad land easements for private land ownership would interfere with trails similar to Fish Creek in other communities as well, including my current community of Girdwood where I use a railroad easement almost every single day to access my closest trail system. It is 2025 - we know that green spaces and trails make for healthier communities. Let's not hinder trail creation and healthier lives for Alaskan residents.

Please vote against HB 136.

Thanks,

Mariel Terry
[REDACTED]
Girdwood, AK 99587

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Lindsay Glick [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, May 5, 2025 8:25 PM
To: House Transportation
Subject: HB 136

Hello,

I am writing as an Anchorage constituent who bike commutes and frequently bikes, walks, and skis the fabulous trails of Anchorage. I oppose HB 136 and would like you to please take the following points into account:

- The Fish Creek Trail, which has broad public support and funding already in place, could be canceled if this bill passes, and the Municipality of Anchorage would have to pay back over \$1 million in federal funding.
- This sets a dangerous precedent for trail projects statewide, such as the Alaska Long Trail.
- Trails make our communities safer, healthier, and more connected. We shouldn't prioritize private interests over public access.
- It would allow private landowners to block trails and other public infrastructure in the railroad corridor.

Thank you for your consideration.

Lindsay Glick
[REDACTED]

Anchorage, AK 99504

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Donna Knutson <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, May 5, 2025 8:05 PM
To: House Transportation
Subject: HB 136

Please do not approve HB 136. This bill is designed to possible stop a long awaited 1 mile connector trail in Anchorage. The project has been through years of public process, environmental review and design. Voters have approved the project through bonds, and a great deal of money has been spent on the planning and design.

Sincerely,

Donna Knutson

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Jesse Funk Funk <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, May 5, 2025 8:12 PM
To: House Transportation
Subject: Please vote No on HB 136

Dear Members of the House Transportation Committee,

I'm writing to express my opposition to HB 136.

The land in question is owned by the State of Alaska and should not be given away—especially not free of charge. If adjacent landowners wish to use Alaska Railroad right-of-way, they should lease it like any other state asset.

HB 136 threatens to derail the Fish Creek Trail project, which has broad community support and secured federal funding. This bill would jeopardize public access and set a dangerous precedent for how we treat public lands in the future.

Please vote no on HB 136.

Sincerely,

Jesse, Ashley, and Fritz Funk

[REDACTED]

Anchorage, AK, 99504

Griffen Sukkaew

From: JP Bennett <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, May 5, 2025 8:08 PM
To: House Transportation
Subject: HB 136

Hello Alaska House Transportation Committee,

I am writing in opposition to HB136 for several reasons:

- 1) It gives landowners additional rights beyond their property lines to prevent reasonable trail developments that benefit entire communities. The Fish Creek Connector Trail is an example. Not one square inch of private property would be touched, yet the wealthy property owners would be able to lock up railroad right-of-ways, which are State of Alaska properties, and keep the community from enjoying healthy, family activities for residents and tourists alike;
- 2) Many of the trails that might not be built have already gone through feasibility studies, have funding lined up and have overwhelming support from the local communities. Again, the Fish Creek Connector Trail is a prime example of a trail proposal that has followed every step in accordance with proper procedure and now is jeopardy because a few influential landowners want to control state property to their own advantage.
- 3) The recreational trails that have already been developed (such as Anchorage's Coastal Trail) are popular and provide quality-of-life benefits for all. HB 136 might prevent development of the Alaska Long Trail, that trail would be a boon to Alaska adventurers and tourists. alike, the way the legendary Appalachian Trail has been.

Government should work for the benefit of all the people they represent, not just the wealthy and influential. HB 136 is a flawed bill that would prevent ordinary Alaskans from enjoying State of Alaska land.

As an aside, the lead engineer for the Fish Creek Connector, Noah King, is an Alaska born and raised man from Soldotna, a product of our public schools. I know him personally and he is putting his civil engineer skills to work on a project that will make Alaska a better place.

Thank you for your time and attention,

James Bennett
[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK
99501

Griffen Sukkaew

From: CRAIG KNUTSON <c[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, May 5, 2025 7:58 PM
To: House Transportation
Subject: Opposed to HB 136

I am alarmed at the implications of HB 136. Who proposed this legislation and what is its purpose? It was either poorly written or intentionally crafted to benefit a few landowners to impede or prevent trail building in Alaska. HB 136 appears to allow individual landowners to control the use of long-standing easements.

In Anchorage, HB 136 might allow a few landowners to prevent the use of the railroad easement to push through a long desired trail connector between Fish Creek and the Tony Knowle's Coastal trail. This link has been supported by the community through several elections, plus \$1 MM has already been spent - which would have to be returned to the Federal government. The landowners might argue (and in fact one has publicly voiced his opposition to any trail) that the easement is only for use by the railroad. It seems to me that the easement is for a "transportation" corridor - or any other type of corridor requiring a continuous uninterrupted route thru town. Transitioning the use of the easement from railroad trains to bicycles should not be grounds for abandoning the idea of an easement route.

Alaska is a land rich in trails and trail potential. One reason other states are envious of our trails is that we have a lot of open space and are less restricted by private land ownership. The Public doesn't have to fight Landowners as much for access. HB 136, as written (designed) would make trail and park development much more difficult, expensive, and less successful.

Sent from my iPhone

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Lisa Bulkow <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, May 5, 2025 7:45 PM
To: House Transportation
Subject: Opposition to HB136

I would like to voice my opposition to HB136. Despite years of work, advocacy and money spent to create the Fish Creek trail extension, this bill would prioritize rights of a few wealthy landowners over those of the general public. The Railroad is a public corporation and its right of way is given in the trust from the public. If the railroad is able to accomodate the trail in its right of way that should be the preferred use of the land.

Thank you.

Lisa Bulkow
Lifelong Anchorage Resident and Voter

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Rosemary Austin <a[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, May 5, 2025 7:41 PM
To: House Transportation
Subject: HB 136 as it relates to Fish Creek Trail

Dear House Transportation Committee,

I am writing to ask that you reject HB 136. This bill would threaten a project in Anchorage that has long been in planning stages and is supported by the community as a whole. It would also jeopardize the Alaska Long Trail which has strong statewide support.

As a resident of Anchorage, I have for three decades enjoyed our paved greenbelts and other trails year-round and I have been grateful that as a community we have supported such trails which can be used for recreation and transportation.

When I first learned of the plans to build a segment that connected the trail from Northern Lights Boulevard to the Coastal Trail, I decided to bike the existing segments of the route for the first time. The trail connects neighborhoods, parks, and businesses while keeping trail users mostly off streets. For families biking or walking with children, this is an important safety factor. One area that uses streets, however, takes riders onto the streets on the Turnagain neighborhood with multiple intersections.

The proposed route following the Alaska Railroad easement would allow users to continue to follow Fish Creek to its estuary until it meets the Tony Knowles Coastal Trail. This route is far preferable, however this bill would allow one person to prevent this trail from being completed as planned. It would also hinder plans for future trails or other projects that serve the public good.

For the health and safety of our communities, please reject HB 136.

Respectfully,

Rosemary Austin

[REDACTED]
Anchorage 99504

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Morgan Bruno <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, May 5, 2025 6:41 PM
To: House Transportation
Subject: HB 136 opposition

Dear House Transportation Committee,

I am writing to express my opposition to HB 136. The wishes of a few vocal private property owners whose land abuts Alaska Railroad ROWs should not take precedent over the good of the community at large.

Thank you for your consideration.

Morgan Bruno

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Christi A. Foist [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, May 5, 2025 7:17 PM
To: House Transportation
Subject: HB 136

Hello, I am writing as a Spenard area resident (26th and Minnesota) who regularly walks and, in snow-free months, bikes around the area. In the five-plus years I've lived in Anchorage, the city's amazing trail network has become one of my favorite parts of living here, and one of the first things I show to out-of-town guests or recommend that visitors explore.

It is because of that experience that I oppose HB 136, which would weaken the state's easement protections and, thereby, public access to public land and waterways. I'm particularly opposed to it because of what this bill would mean for walkers and bikers like myself.

If property owners get to restrict railroad use of its easements, that significantly limits options for expanding and building new trails. I spent years as a Monday-through-Friday bike commuter in San Francisco and I can tell you: if the Anchorage trails offer a much better way to get across the city, Anchorage *streets* offer a much worse experience. The high pedestrian deaths underscore this. **We need more trails that offer off-street ways to get across the city.** I can also tell you, as a resident of a very low-income building where many people don't have cars, our city needs safe ways for residents like my neighbors to walk or bike around the city! With rising costs under tariffs and other cuts to Alaska federal funding, even those with a car may need to use their bikes for more trips. **We need more trails to help people safely reduce their transportation costs.**

Railroad easements, in the case of the Fish Creek Trail extension, offer one of the least disruptive ways to connect this trail to Coastal trail. I've personally biked west along Northern Lights en route to the Coastal trail, and I hate it every time I do. The sidewalk is quite narrow much of the way, and broken with all kinds of frost heaves and other cracks. It's bad enough on a bike; I can't imagine how uncomfortable and dangerous it could be for someone using a wheel chair. Far better to route pedestrians and bikers off the street sooner! Using the railroad easement to connect the trails would also reduce bike and foot traffic through the residential neighborhood northwest of the proposed extension. Wouldn't that benefit more property owners than the few pushing for HB 136?

I urge you to vote against this bill, and focus your attention on matters that have greater urgency and importance. If easements exist to ensure access to public land and waterways, while allowing some private property ownership nearby, then it makes no sense to weaken Alaska's easement law! Please vote down HB 136 and protect current and future generations' ability to access public land and waterways. I implore you to stand up for *all* of your constituents, not just the wealthy few.

Sincerely,
Christi A. Foist

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Kathy Knutson <k[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, May 5, 2025 7:08 PM
To: House Transportation
Subject: HB 136

I am writing today to OPPOSE HB 136. As a supporter of trails in Anchorage and Alaska, I feel this bill undermines the public interest, in favor of a very small minority of small minded individual homeowners.

I support trails with my time, talent and treasure, and make use of the trails in and around Anchorage daily. Trails increase safety and community connection, as well as contributing to the health and wellbeing of the citizens of our great State. This bill is a political devise to undermine the will of the people of Anchorage, who have voted to support the Fish Creek Connector trail. Approximately one million dollars has already been spent on this project, which will have to be returned if the project does not proceed. This railroad easement is the perfect place for the connector trail. To elevate the interest one one landowner over the public good is unacceptable.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Knutson

[REDACTED]

Anchorage, AK 99501

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Susan Sherman [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, May 5, 2025 6:27 PM
To: House Transportation
Subject: HB 136

I am opposed to HB 136 which would allow private landowners to block public infrastructure in the railroad corridor. Specifically, this bill endangers the Fish Creek Trail connection which is widely supported by the public and a much needed link in our city's trail system. Generally, trails make our communities safer, healthier, more connected, and more desirable places to live. Please don't prioritize the private interest of a few over public access.

Thank you,

Susan Sherman
[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK 99502

Griffen Sukkaew

From: David Sonneborn [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, May 5, 2025 6:25 PM
To: House Transportation
Subject: Vote no on HB 136 and HB 142.

Dear House Transportation Committee:

I am writing to ask for your help in opposing HB 136 and HB 142, two bills introduced by Rep. Chuck Kopp that threaten the Fish Creek Trail Connection project, a long-planned, community-supported trail in west Anchorage that would fill a critical gap in our community's non-motorized transportation network.

I'm personally opposed to wealthy landowners building adjacent to parks and then trying to use these lands for personal use and keep others out. This is an extension of the same phenomenon. I understand one of the litigants has even extended a fence into railroad land to expand his back yard. Come on. Lets created this trail for all our citizens and visitors to use and enjoy. Vote no on HB 136 and HB 142.

Thank you for your consideration.

David Sonneborn
[REDACTED]

Anchorage
99517

Griffen Sukkaew

From: N Horn [REDACTED] >
Sent: Monday, May 5, 2025 6:10 PM
To: House Transportation
Subject: HB-136

Hello,

I'm writing to let you know that I oppose HB – 136.

I do not think that the right of way should be extended to private land owners. The trail connections are vital aspect of the Anchorage community and a wonderful source of recreation and transportation across the entire city. I would hate to let this proposal hinder any further trail development underway.

Thanks,
Nicholas Horn
Anchorage resident

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Mike Jens <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 12:01 PM
To: House Transportation
Subject: Fish Creek Trail Extension

I have been a bicycle riders on the trails and streets of Anchorage for the past 50 years. I have ridden the Coastal Trail many times and have passed by Fish Creek many times wishing that we had a bike trail that would allow travel going South up where the Fish Creek trail has been planned. Now that we are very close to realizing that such a trail extension could become a reality I am terribly disappointed to hear that a few homeowners in the area are trying to stop all progress on the trail extension. Please do not allow these few homeowners to stop a very worthy project. Instead, please allow the Fish Creek Trail to be completed as planned. Thank you for considering my request. Please realize the majority of bicycle riders in Anchorage feel the same way.

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Bridget Paule [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 11:54 AM
To: House Transportation
Cc: Rep. Carolyn Hall
Subject: Against HB 136

Dear Transportation Committee Members,

I'm writing in opposition to HB 136 "An Act relating to use of railroad easements."

HB 136 is a "solution" that lacks a problem. Based on my read, the effect of HB 136 would be to compel the Alaska Railroad to allow use of the railroad right of way by adjacent private landowners over any other compatible use. There does not seem to be any limitation on this private use except for meeting the criterion that it "does not unreasonably interfere" with the right of way. I'm not comfortable with the way the bill seems to prioritize private landowner right-of-way use over all other possible uses. To me, this sounds like codifying a free, un-taxed extension of private property into railroad corporation owned and/or managed land. I also see this bill as entirely unnecessary statutory bloat. Throughout most of Alaska, including much of Anchorage, private landowners and the general public have de-facto access to railroad rights of way. I don't see any public, State or railroad benefit accruing from this move to elevate private use over any other use. I hope that the Committee agrees and decides not to move this bill to the House floor.

Thank you,

Bridget Paule



theworkingbodyak.com

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Griffen Sukkaew

From: Jeff Levin <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 11:52 AM
To: House Transportation
Subject: Opposition to HB 136

It's completely inappropriate for private landowners to utilize an Alaska Railroad right-of-way extension to block improvements to the municipal trail system. I oppose HB 136 strongly.

--

Jeff Levin

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Max Kritzer <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 11:47 AM
To: House Transportation
Subject: I oppose HB 136

Hello,

I am writing to share my strong opposition to HB 136, and to urge you to stop this bill from moving forward.

Public trails are one of the greatest assets in Alaska. HB 136 would allow private landowners to block trails and other public infrastructure in the railroad corridor. Particularly, the Fish Creek Trail, which has wide public support and is already funded, could be canceled if this bill passes, and the city of Anchorage would have to pay back over \$1 million in federal funding.

Thank you,
Max Kritzer

[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK 99503
[REDACTED]

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Steve Zemke [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 11:44 AM
To: House Transportation
Subject: HB 136

I am a long time resident of Anchorage and have used its many recreational resources extensively. In fact it is major reason I live in the State. HB136 prioritizes the rights of a few privileged individuals and restricts the opportunity for recreational access to a vast majority of the States residents. This restriction is a major reason for people to not stay in our State and move to another state that more fully recognizes the value of public access. For these reasons I highly oppose HB 136. Thank you for your consideration.

Steve Zemke

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Justin Therriault [REDACTED] >
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 11:28 AM
To: House Transportation
Subject: Oppose HB136

Co. Chairs Rep. Ashley Carrick and Rep. Ted Eischeid:

I am a resident in the Turnagain neighborhood and I am writing to you and the committee asking you to oppose HB136. While the primary sponsor behind HB136, Rep. Chuck Kopp, has stated over and over again that his bill is not meant to impact the Fish Creek Trail Connection Project; he fails to acknowledge that this bill will stop the completion of this trail, and numerous other public projects, in their entirety.

For the better part of the past decade, Anchorage voters have continuously passed bonds in excess of \$1.5 million to have the Fish Creek Trail completed. This has helped the city secure federal matching dollars that have and will pay for more than 90% of the total projected cost. During this time numerous government agencies, at both the state and city level, have worked tirelessly to engage with stakeholders, neighbors, and the public to find a preferred trail alternative. This option has proven to be, through rigorous study; the most cost effective, safest, and least impactful option to both the delicate Fish Creek Estuary, and adjacent private property.

One of the purposefully intended consequences of HB136 would be to give private property owners veto power over what happens in the railroad right of way. Moreover, this debate over the railroad right of way has already had its day in court with the 9th circuit. While a few property owners may be unhappy with the court's ruling in the case of *Alaska Railroad Corporation v. Flying Crows Subdivision*, I am asking the committee to recognize the court's decision. HB136 is an attempt to circumnavigate the due process of litigation through this legislative body.

Now is a time when Anchorage, and Alaska, need to be developing and retaining; a motivated, young, professional workforce. Public projects have proven to be highly sought after critical amenities in cities across the country, and will help us meet our local goals. HB136 is a counterproductive bill that will be detrimental to our communities statewide, and will have an immediate negative impact on the Fish Creek Trail. Please oppose HB136.

Sincerely,
Justin Therriault

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Brian Swartzentruber [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 11:09 AM
To: House Transportation
Subject: Fish Creek Trail

Hello,

I am a walker/biker and I use the Coastal Trail frequently. I take visitors there throughout the summer to show off the "Jewel of Anchorage". The Coastal Trail is probably the best public money ever spent on a recreational project. It is available and suitable to all residents of Anchorage. Any opportunity to expand or enhance it should not be passed up. To allow a handful of private property owners block the Fish Creek extension would be shameful. Brian Swartzentruber

Griffen Sukkaew

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 11:05 AM
To: House Transportation
Subject: Bill 136

I am opposed to HB 136 that would extend private property rights to properties in transportation right of ways. In particular this bill would eliminate the Fish Creek access trail that would provide a transportation conduit from neighborhoods that need it.

Lisa Oakley

[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK

Griffen Sukkaew

From: T [REDACTED] >
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 10:48 AM
To: House Transportation
Subject: HB 136

Hello,

I am writing in opposition to HB 136 as it would essentially privatize public land, removing the benefits to all Alaskans for the benefit of the few.

In West Anchorage we the public are in support of the Fish Creek trail which already has federal funds allocated and needs to use AKRR right of way. One aspect not discussed enough is that before the railroad fenced off the access adjacent to pedestrian bridge over Northern Lights blvd , we regularly walked along this right of way and none of the problems that adjacent land owners currently fear ever happened. Our normal and traditional use of this access was removed without input.

Thomas Bailly

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Darlene Galido [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 10:46 AM
To: House Transportation
Subject: Oppose HB 136 - testimony

Dear Transportation Committee Members,

Please DO NOT pass HB 136.

HB 136 would allow private landowners to block trails and other public infrastructure in the railroad corridor.

Our family, and many others, want to bike and walk more around Anchorage. The Fish Creek Trail connector project in particular will be a great asset to the trail network – unless it gets killed via this bill.

For my family personally, our kindergartener who is learning to bike would love to bike to school (there is no bus service), but our current route requires multiple road crossings at large and busy intersections. Crossing Northern Lights Blvd, Benson, and using the sidewalk along Minnesota is scary as a parent, because it feels incredibly dangerous. The Fish Creek Trail Connector would help us get to the one bridge over Northern Lights that is even feasible to use.

Bike and pedestrian routes separated from traffic, such as in railroad corridors, are immensely safer. Please do not let a few individual landowners who want to extend their backyards ruin the possibility of making our great trail network even safer and easier to use.

Thank you for rejecting HB 136.

Darlene Galido, P.E.

Civil engineer and Anchorage voter

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Britta Brecheen <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 10:34 AM
To: House Transportation
Subject: HB 136

To the House Transportation Committee,

Please vote NO on HB 136 which would block the extension of the Fish Creek Trail to connect to the Coastal Trail.

My house is in Spenard, a neighborhood that I love and I am currently only a few blocks from the Fish Creek Trail. I am also an avid bicycle commuter and currently have to bicycle on roads to reach the Coastal Trail. I am also a mom to a 3 year old boy who loves to bicycle with me, but I do not feel it's safe for him to bicycle on roads yet. It would be amazing to have this trail extension so we could ride together! For the health of our community and the future generation, please do not support one family's desire to block this project.

Thank you,
Britta Brecheen

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Ann Rappoport [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 10:31 AM
To: House Transportation
Cc: Rep. Ashley Carrick; Rep. Ted Eischeid; Rep. Genevieve Mina; Rep. Louise Stutes; Rep. Kevin McCabe; Rep. Cathy Tilton; Rep. Elexie Moore
Subject: Please vote NO on HB 136!

Dear Transportation Committee members -

I urge you to vote no on HB 136 which the Transportation Committee is scheduled to hear this afternoon.

This bill would likely end a long planned and publicly desired trail project to complete the Fish Creek Trail, thereby connecting the Fish Creek and Coastal Trails in Anchorage, providing important neighborhood connections and off-road routes for commuting cyclists. It would also mean that millions of dollars, time and energy already invested in the planning and design of this trail would have been for nought. Moreover, the Municipality of Anchorage would have to RETURN over \$1 million to the federal government - funds that have already been spent and that our Muni budget does not have. The benefit of HB 136 would primarily be for one homeowner who does not want a trail this close to their property, yet the easement for this trail, along the railroad right-of-way has existed for years.

A court case around this trail was previously settled - in favor of the trail. That case was upheld by the Supreme Court, but now there is this effort to use the Legislature, through HB 136, to circumvent that ruling.

HB 136 would have broader consequences as it could allow private landowners to block any trails and other infrastructure in the railroad corridor that connects so much of Alaska's population. This is not a good precedent to set for other trails, for example, the Alaska Long Trail which will provide an economic boost for Alaska as well as a tremendous recreational opportunity for Alaskans and visitors!

Numerous studies document the importance of trails and outdoor time for our physical, mental, and emotional health. Ensuring public access for the many should be a higher priority than the private interest of a few.

Thank you,
Ann Rappoport
[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK 99516

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Sam Raife [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 10:05 AM
To: House Transportation
Subject: Oppose HB 136 - Protect Public Land Access

Dear House Transportation Committee,

I'm writing to urge you to vote NO on HB 136. This bill would severely jeopardize public trail projects across Alaska, including the long-planned Fish Creek Trail connector in Anchorage. This sets a troubling precedent not just for Anchorage, but for communities statewide, threatening efforts like the Alaska Long Trail and future greenway connections. Our public lands are not just a huge economic draw for tourism, but also a vital resource for Alaskans. They are part of what makes our communities livable and connected and will ensure Alaska is a great place to live and raise families well into the future.

Please don't allow private interests to erase decades of public work and community planning. Vote no on HB 136!

Sincerely,

Sam Raife
Anchor Park, Anchorage, AK
([REDACTED])
swraife@gmail.com

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Dwight Iverson <d[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 10:02 AM
To: House Transportation
Subject: Support trails.

I support public trails. And many people in our community do too. We have funding for trails. These are for the public good and enjoyment and use and health and safety. We need politicians at the state level that work for the better good of the people. We don't need politicians like Costello and Kopp that try to tie up public easement areas into private zones. We need good people in the state house not private interest big money people. Support our trails support our community.

Dwight Iverson

Griffen Sukkaew

From: ed I <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 9:54 AM
To: House Transportation
Subject: HB 136 - oppose

Dear Committee Members,

Fundamentally, I believe the use of public land should be used for public purposes. Therefore, am voicing my opposition to HB 136. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Edwin Lee

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Doreen M. Waller <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 9:09 AM
To: House Transportation
Subject: oppose HB 136

Good Morning,

I am reaching out today to voice my strong opposition to HB 136.

- This bill poses a serious threat by prioritizing the desires of private landowners to use Alaska Railroad (ARRC) Right-of-Way as an extension of their own property over the desires of ARRC and by extension the community, for trail and other projects. Furthermore:
- HB 136 would allow private landowners to block trails and other public infrastructure in the railroad corridor. This represents the needs of the few outweighing the needs of the many and is extremely pretentious and selfish.
- HB 136 would effectively kill the Fish Creek Trail project, which has broad public support and funding already in place. Furthermore, the Municipality of Anchorage would have to pay back over \$1M in federal funding. This is fiscally irresponsible, particularly in light of the recent impacts of DOGE.
- HB 136 sets a dangerous precedent for other trail and community projects statewide, such as the Alaska Long Trail project, by allowing a small group or individual to cancel projects.
- Trails make our communities safer, healthier, and more connected. We should not prioritize private interests over public access, particularly when the private interest is on land they do not own.

Thank you,

Doreen Waller

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Alison Kelley <a [REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 9:04 AM
To: House Transportation
Subject: Resident and business owner comment on HB136

Hello,

I'm writing to voice my stiff opposition to this bill, which essentially provides for private ownership of public lands by preventing public uses of those lands, lands that are intended to provide economic, environmental, or other benefits to the public - all Alaskans.

HB 136 appears to be specifically written to allow private landowners to block the Fish Creek Trail to the Ocean, a trail widely supported by the public, and supported with public funds in the long process to make it happen. The bill would allow private landowners to block other public infrastructure in the railroad corridor.

Blocking the Fish Creek Trail project would require the Municipality of Anchorage to pay back over \$1 million in federal funding. Will the private landowners foot that bill? Likely not. Regardless, these lands are not theirs. It's long past time to stop the NIMBY-ism that has afforded excessive power to the few.

This sets a dangerous precedent for trail projects statewide, such as the Alaska Long Trail. Alaska tourism is one of the only long-term viable resources we have. This bill would allow the few to prevent or limit potential economic benefits, as well as quality of life benefits. Alaska lands are for public benefit, not private viewsheds, privacy barriers, etc.

Please do not support this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.
Alison

--



Alison Kelley, Owner/Environmental Scientist
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Joe Zych [REDACTED] >
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 9:01 AM
To: House Transportation
Subject: HB 136

Good Morning,

I am reaching out today to voice my strong opposition to HB 136.

- This bill poses a serious threat by prioritizing the desires of private landowners to use Alaska Railroad (ARRC) Right-of-Way as an extension of their own property over the desires of ARRC and by extension the community, for trail and other projects. Furthermore:
- HB 136 would allow private landowners to block trails and other public infrastructure in the railroad corridor. This represents the needs of the few outweighing the needs of the many and is extremely pretentious and selfish.
- HB 136 would effectively kill the Fish Creek Trail project, which has broad public support and funding already in place. Furthermore, the Municipality of Anchorage would have to pay back over \$1M in federal funding. This is fiscally irresponsible, particularly in light of the recent impacts of DOGE.
- HB 136 sets a dangerous precedent for other trail and community projects statewide, such as the Alaska Long Trail project, by allowing a small group or individual to cancel projects.
- Trails make our communities safer, healthier, and more connected. We should not prioritize private interests over public access, particularly when the private interest is on land they do not own.

Thank you,

Joe

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Karly O <k[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 9:00 AM
To: House Transportation
Subject: Opposing HB 136

Hi there,

My name is Karly and I oppose HB 136. I am an active cyclist and walker in Anchorage and use the connector trails and multi use paths every single day. It's imperative that we continue to focus on access for the whole community to trails and paths. Many people use these paths for commuting, exercise, and pure enjoyment of the outdoors. We don't want to take away this access for a railroad extension that doesn't benefit the greater public. Please consider putting your constituents and their needs first above a corporation's. We need you to stick up for us.

Thank you, I appreciate you taking the time to read this email.
Karly

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Tazlina Mannix <t[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 8:55 AM
To: House Transportation
Subject: Vote NO on HB 136

Dear House Transportation Committee,

I am writing to express my opposition to HB 136, which would allow private landowners to block trails and other public infrastructure in the railroad corridor. This bill prioritizes private landowners over larger community needs. Trails make Alaska communities healthier, more vibrant places to live, work, and recreate. We need to be supporting trail development, not creating barriers.

As a lifelong Alaska, public health professional, and trail user, I urge you to vote NO on HB 136.

Sincerely,
Tazlina Mannix
Anchorage, AK

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Matthew Coburn [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 8:47 AM
To: House Transportation
Subject: Opposition to HB 136

Good Morning,

I am reaching out today to voice my strong opposition to HB 136.

This bill poses a serious threat by prioritizing the desires of private landowners to use Alaska Railroad (ARRC) Right-of-Way as an extension of their own property over the desires of ARRC and by extension the community, for trail and other projects. Furthermore:

- HB 136 would allow private landowners to block trails and other public infrastructure in the railroad corridor. This represents the needs of the few outweighing the needs of the many and is extremely pretentious and selfish.
- HB 136 would effectively kill the Fish Creek Trail project, which has broad public support and funding already in place. Furthermore, the Municipality of Anchorage would have to pay back over \$1M in federal funding. This is fiscally irresponsible, particularly in light of the recent impacts of DOGE.
- HB 136 sets a dangerous precedent for other trail and community projects statewide, such as the Alaska Long Trail project, by allowing a small group or individual to cancel projects.
- Trails make our communities safer, healthier, and more connected. We should not prioritize private interests over public access, particularly when the private interest is on land they do not own.

Thank you,

Matthew Coburn, PE
[REDACTED]

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Kim Mincer [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 8:33 AM
To: House Transportation
Subject: HB 136 comment

House Transportation Committee members,

I oppose HB 136 that would affect the health (mental and physical) and connectedness of the community of Anchorage. Trails are key to self-regulation for sanity - balancing the chaos of living. The enjoyment of movement keeps us happy and sane - and helps to get us to places around our community without adding another vehicle to the roads. In a world where loss of access is shutting us down more each day, we are losing our connection to community, safer travels, mode of health, and joy. The Fish Creek Trails has public support and funding already in place. Please honor the need for the greater good.

Thank you,

Kim Mincer

Anchorage resident

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Cliff Wilson [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 8:28 AM
To: House Transportation
Subject: Support fish creek bike trail

Hello,

I am writing to express my support for continued improvements in the Anchorage trail system. Please join me in that. Biking in Anchorage has been a highlight in our community both winter and summer and all ages and abilities. Having a thorough trail network is crucial for enabling regular commuter use and also allowing for recreation that can encompass the entire area of Anchorage which is a world class outdoor paradise!

I have lived, worked, commuted and recreated here since 2008 and now wife and I are raising our family here. We have grown roots here because of the full array of opportunities to be outside in nature and enjoy human powered adventures. We need high quality trails both in the wilderness and in the urban wilderness here in town. Please support that!!

Cliff Wilson
[REDACTED]

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Bonnie Wanat <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 8:27 AM
To: House Transportation
Subject: HB 136 and HB 142

Dear House Transportation Committee,

We are writing to ask for your help in opposing HB 136 and HB 142, two bills introduced by Rep. Chuck Kopp that threaten the Fish Creek Trail Connection project, a long-planned, community-supported trail in west Anchorage that would fill a critical gap in our community's non-motorized transportation network.

For nearly three decades, the Fish Creek Trail Connection has been part of Anchorage's long-term vision for safe, accessible, and connected trails. It will fill a one-mile gap between existing multi-use trails, improving access to outdoor recreation and providing a safer route for people walking and biking.

Anchorage voters have repeatedly shown their support by approving four bonds to fund the project since 2020, and a petition in support of Fish Creek last fall received nearly 1,000 signatures. To date, over \$1 million has been spent on planning, design, and environmental work, and the project is strongly backed by citizens and organizations like Bike Anchorage, the Anchorage Park Foundation, and community councils.

These two bills would create new legal barriers for public trails built along railroad corridors:

- HB 136 would prioritize the desires of private landowners near railroad easements over public trails and other such projects that benefit the whole community.
- HB 142 would require the approval of adjacent landowners before a trail could be built within a railroad easement, giving a small number of wealthy individuals veto power over major public infrastructure projects.

These bills tie back to a larger legal fight involving the 2023 case Flying Crown Subdivision v. Alaska Railroad Corporation, which also addressed private landowners wishing to use railroad easements as an extension of their own property. It was decided in favor of the Railroad, upheld at the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, then appealed to the Supreme Court. One landowner near the proposed Fish Creek Trail project signed onto an amicus brief in this case for the explicit purpose of creating a legal mechanism to stop the trail. The Supreme Court declined to overturn the Railroad's victory in this case, and HB 136 and HB 142 have now emerged as an attempt to achieve the same result through legislation.

If these bills pass, the Fish Creek Trail project, and potentially other trails locally and statewide, could be delayed indefinitely or stopped altogether. The city could also be required to repay more than \$1 million in federal funds already allocated to the project.

Trails are an essential part of our communities, providing safe spaces for recreation, commuting, and enjoying the outdoors. It's not right for a few wealthy landowners to override established community priorities and long-term public investments. We ask for your support in moving the Fish Creek Trail forward by opposing HB 136 and HB 142.

Thank you,
Tom and Bonnie Wanat
[REDACTED]
Eagle River, AK. 99577

Sent from my iPad

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Colby Brandt <c[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 8:17 AM
To: House Transportation
Subject: Fish Creek, HB 136

I support Fish Creek and further public trail projects. And I sure hope you do too.

Cheers,
Colby Wyatt Brandt
cwbrewer108@gmail.com

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Gailyn Taylor [REDACTED] >
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 8:10 AM
To: House Transportation
Subject: HB 136

I am writing to oppose HB 136. I live in Turnagain, on the south side of Northern Lights Blvd near the pedestrian bridge and the start of the proposed Fish Creek Trail connection. I am deeply concerned that this proposed bill will hinder the completion of this project.

When we moved into this neighborhood in 2009, I was incredibly happy to find the single track trail that wandered down next to the tracks and along the wetland, eventually connecting up to the coastal trail. For many of us who love accessing green spaces but can't afford to live in the more upscale neighborhoods that abut them, this kind of access is what makes Anchorage a livable city. I have been one of the community members advocating for this trail since the sewer updates in the wetland and the subsequent fencing that made it very difficult to access this greenway. I have every sympathy for the adjacent landowners. We tried for years to get the railroad to allow us to build the trail right on the utility road so it would not impact them, but the railroad's safety concerns meant the proposed trail needed to be pushed further out in the ROW.

I have been to all the open houses on trail design. They have done everything possible to minimize the impacts on adjacent landowners. So much time and money and love have gone into this project- it would be devastating if a piece of legislation undermined this effort. Plus, Anchorage would be on the hook to return something like a million dollars in federal funds if it doesn't go through.

For this and other proposed trails in the AKRR ROW, I urge you to not advance HB 136. Trails that connect communities and greenways add tremendously to the quality of life in Anchorage and in Alaska in general, and we need to preserve access and keep building trails. Think of what the Coastal Trail and Chester and Campbell Creek trails add to our city. Let's think of the future and the infrastructure that supports recreation and connection for our whole population, and continue in that tradition.

Thank you,

Gailyn Taylor
Turnagain South

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Heidi Schulz [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 4:31 AM
To: House Transportation
Subject: Fish Creek Trail

Please, please take into account how important trails are to our city and state so please block HB 136 from going through. Alaska is known for its outdoor activities and trails will continue to have a huge asset for our community! Plus, the studies and funding have already occurred!
Thank you!

Sent from my iPhone
Heidi Schulz

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Dwight Iverson <d[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 1:02 AM
To: House Transportation
Subject: Stop HB 136 & HB 142

Hello,

I support public trails. Public trails are a public benefit for safety, recreation, and health among other good reasons. I do not support decreasing public opportunities by a few people that do not support public trails.

Government should work for the people. And not against the people. These trails have long been funded and supported. Government officials should not try to privatize right of way areas and decrease projects designed for the public good.

Dwight Iverson

Griffen Sukkaew

From: Dwight Iverson [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 12:42 AM
To: House Transportation
Subject: Stop HB 136 HB 142

Hello,

I support public trails. Public trails are a public benefit for safety, recreation, and health among other good reasons. I do not support decreasing public opportunities by a few people that do not support public trails.

What is wrong with Chuck Copp? He must really hate people and trails.

Dwight Iverson

Griffen Sukkaew

From: John & Gretchen [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 12:01 AM
To: House Transportation
Subject: Say yes to trail access, no to HB 136

Dear Transportation Committee:

We are not supportive of HB 136.

It appears that HB 136 runs counter to everything I have heard in a 30 year career working on transportation projects that involved the Alaska Railroad. I understand the land status has been consistent for more than a century that the RR has exclusive use of the area along its tracks, dating back to the founding of Anchorage and founding of the Railroad as a federal entity established on what was then federal land. It does not appear proper that well-heeled landowners of exclusive properties such as the one near Fish Cr estuary or the those at the Flying Crown airstrip should be granted use of the railroad land upon request (HB 136 uses the word “shall”), particularly when it appears the motivation is to block public works projects that benefit the public as a whole, such as the Fish Creek Trail. Couldn’t the same law be used elsewhere to block roads, powerlines, pipelines, and other public works within the RR utility corridor? A quick scan of the Anchorage municipal parcel data maps online indicates there are MANY instances of lawns, parking lots, parked cars, parked airplanes, buildings, and the like on the railroad corridor. If most of those are potential landowners who could assert new rights under HB 136, and if you take that few miles of track through Anchorage and consider the same issues throughout the 470 miles of mainline track between Seward and Fairbanks plus all the secondary track, it seems like it could be a problem for the State and RR (and courts) for many years to come.

The Fish Creek Trail has undergone an immense amount of public process in which it was removed from the Fish Creek estuary to protect the habitat values and functions of that area. The RR corridor is a suitable place for the trail—not as attractive for trail users as a fully natural area but much less impactful than a trail in the estuary. Let’s not let an individual knock out a desired public project, but let’s ensure the project protects that landowner from trespass and is as sensitive as possible to uses of the adjacent property.

John Wolfe / Gretchen Nelson

[REDACTED]
Anchorage