May 20, 2020

Chairman Peter Defazio Ranking Member Sam Graves

2165 Rayburn Building 2165 Rayburn Building

Washington, DC 20515 Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Defazio and Ranking Member Graves:

The Amateur Riders Motorcycle Association (ARMCA) was founding in 1969 and chartered as District 23 of the American Motorcyclist Association (AMA) in 1974. For over 50 years, we have been representing the interests of the motorcycle community in Minnesota. Our membership base is over 3,000 members.

We are writing to request that HR 5797, “The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Full Funding Act of 2020” sponsored by Congressman Welch of VT and Congressman Curtis of UT be included in the transportation reauthorization bill currently being drafted in your committee. Without Congressional approval before September 30th, the program is at risk of going dormant, creating a huge void for recreational trail development and maintenance funding.

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) is a pay-to-play program in which the funding for the program is based on the unrefunded gas taxes from non-highway motorized recreation, including dirt bikes, ATVs, 4-wheel drive vehicles, and snowmobiles. The RTP is currently funded at $84 million annually but it is estimated that federal gas taxes paid by motorized recreation amounts to more than $270 million annually. HR 5797 would correct this inequity and return more of the gas tax dollars for off-road recreation. It will also continue the program past the current funding date.

The outdoor recreation industry is a significant, positive economic engine in the United State. According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the U.S. outdoor recreation economy accounted for 2.2 percent ($427.2 billion) of current-dollar gross domestic product (GDP) in 2017.

It is worth noting that the RTP provides funding for motorized and non-motorized trails alike and is administered by the states who select the projects to fund. By law, 30% of the funding goes to motorized trails, 30% goes to non-motorized trails, and 40% goes to mixed-use trails in the states. To see funding projects in each state, you can visit https://arra-access.com/states/ and click on the state you’re interested in. You will also find other informative materials on the site that highlight the great work that has been done with trails across the country, thanks to your past support.

Thank you for your consideration. It is absolutely critical that HR 5797 be included in the upcoming transportation reauthorization bill.

Sincerely,

Tom and Karen Umphress

ARMCA Government Relations